

# RELIGION IN LIFE

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# The Church in Germany

DANIEL W. FIELDER

*An American chaplain tells what he learned from church leaders and loyal churchmen in Bavaria. Holds that the humility of German Christians is the most hopeful prospect for Christendom in Europe.*

## I

IT HAS BEEN extremely difficult during the past twelve years to get an unbiased report on the status of the Christian Church in Germany. People were inclined to believe of the church what they had been led to believe of Germany as a nation, and there was certainly plenty of evidence to indict the German nation as remiss.

The war recently ended has been a war against the German nation; but we are extremely stupid if we jump to any conclusion that the Germans were one-hundred-per-cent Nazi at heart, just as we would be if we said that Americans are one-hundred-per-cent American patriots. If we were to study German life and the historic background, we could no more blame the German people for blindly following fanatical leaders into the holocaust of war than we can credit the majority of American people with complete loyalty to or understanding of our democratic ideals.

Someone has said that the average German has to determine whether he is master or servant. If he is the master, then he becomes an oppressor and a tyrant: if he is a servant, he ingratiates himself by groveling at your feet in humility. Centuries of history in Europe have prepared him for this reaction to life. In the Old World of Europe the people are divided into four classes which have remained distinct. The first class comprises the Junkers with their traditional military and anti-civilian spirit, the wealthiest leaders of industry, and the aristocracy. The second class includes most leaders of industry and commerce, directors and senior business employees. The third class are the small land-owners and tenant farmers. The fourth class are the manual workers and laborers. The last two classes are decidedly in the majority and are susceptible to all shades of socialist opinion. Germans have a real sense of obedience and respect for authority, since it has been a traditional part of their life. They expect clear-cut ideas and will obey them if

given to understand that evasion or noncompliance will not be tolerated. They expect dignity and formality from their officials, also efficiency and abruptness. They are easy to regiment because there has never been an opportunity for them to develop the spirit of democracy.

The extent of regimentation through the superbureaucracy of the Nazis is seen in many instances and cannot be denied. After American troops had occupied Germany many townspeople came with personal requests that were readily granted. The freedom to do things that Americans took for granted and had no thought of denying even to an enemy was a surprise to the Germans, so long under Nazi restriction. When permission was granted they often asked for written authority. When this was given they would then ask that it be stamped, and were satisfied when it was stamped with any kind of stamp if it had the least appearance of official approval. This was the typical German demeanor—but it does not prove that there were none who were aware of what had happened to Germany under the Nazis.

The possibility of the German people thinking for themselves is best shown in the reaction of the church to the Nazi regime. The Protestants of Germany had long since learned to speak out and to declare their attitudes. They had differed with the state and differed with one another. It was impossible for any bishop of the Lutheran Church to speak for the people, because the people were at liberty to disclaim him as their bishop if they disagreed with him. Further, there were three different Lutheran churches which had developed over previous differences in regard to their relation to the state; and there were also free churches, such as the Methodists and Baptists, who were decidedly international in scope. The Protestants of Germany were in the majority, and the Nazis did not find here a group that could be smothered in ignorance and suppressed to the point of nonresistance. There was a real spark of the spirit that is essential to democracy among the Protestants of Germany.

Some have flown over Germany in an aeroplane and have come back to say that Germany is a nation without a conscience or that all "Krauts" are bad. Others who have known contact with Germany only through military acquaintance have concluded that any German who said he did not favor Hitler is a liar. There is no doubt that Germany was close to one-hundred-per-cent Nazi—in the same way that Georgia and a few other Southern states are a rather solid Democratic South. This does not mean

that all Democratic party members intelligently believe in what the Democratic party stands for, any more than it means that Hitler could consider all of his Nazi legions loyal to him. Those who were committed to the cause of Hitler were given the distinction of belonging to the Schutzstaffel Corps or held offices of leadership in the Nazi party. Many of the SS leaders had previous records that fitted them for their selected role as protectors of the Nazi dream. Some were graduates of penal institutions and had reputations for violence and sadistic crimes as their qualifications. Those who have dealt with the German army are able to distinguish between the fanatic and the ordinary German citizen who fought because he knew nothing else to do.

Toward the end of 1932, the *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeitspartei* (Nazis) was established as the favored and strongest political power. After this change which marked a new trend in German life, the Evangelische Kirche (Protestant church) had to determine what practical attitude, in accordance with its own principles, it was to take in relation to this new party. At the beginning there were indications that the Nazi leaders had a fair idea of some of the social concepts of the church and there seemed to be great promise of a fruitful co-operative effort to accomplish an inner and outer renewal of the people. There were some contrary and radical utterances, even by party authorities, but these were interpreted as the unreasonable and unavoidable mutterings that are associated with the fermenting spirit of any new political movement. The favorable prospect for the accomplishment of many changes, for which the church also yearned, far outweighed the seriousness of any radical utterances by some who belonged to the party.

The Party Program (Par. 24) used the term "positive Christianity" to describe the foundation of the movement. The promise of relief from pressing social needs and from previous unemployment, and of support in benevolent activities, found a hopeful echo in the church. Many party members, whose faithfulness and active support of the church were unquestioned, nurtured and strengthened the warm hope that a people's movement had been started which would lead men back to the old paths of piety and decency. Yes, one could believe that the days would be renewed when the concerns of faith and return to God would be driving powers. The radical nature of such dangerous notions as the "race idea" were not recognized. Many sound and social-minded people believed that it was a duty imposed by conscience for them to enter the party

in order to exercise their limited influence toward clarifying, refining, and activating the movement. They believed with sincerity that it would be a mark of idleness and poor citizenship for them not to support the efforts of the prevailing government in the good points of the program they had announced. Certain stories that later were recognized as planted anecdotes, whose origins are not known, floated about through certain sections of the church and had great influence in developing a favorable attitude among church people toward the party. According to one piece of information, Hitler told a renowned pastor that he daily read the New Testament. This story was reprinted in various church papers and was accepted with gladness and hopefulness. Only later, after it had accomplished its propagandistic end, was it denied.

But the greatest influence was found in the speech of Hitler in the Garrison Church of Potsdam on March 23, 1933. The statement read:

The national government sees in the two Christian Confessions the most important factors for the preservation of the people. It will respect the agreements made between the churches and the government. Their rights should remain untouched. The national government will protect the influence of the Christian Confessions in the school and in education. Their duty involves the proper relation between State and Church. The rights of the Church will not be diminished, her position over against the State will not be altered.

Here was no ordinary speaker; the lines of direction and policy were being announced by the newly called Chancellor himself. It was taken for granted that it was declared by authority of Reichspresident von Hindenburg, who had been true and faithful to the church and had its confidence. The speech was made with solemnity and in such a connection that it was accepted as a pledge and promise of the State. There was no trusting German who did not accept the utterance of Hitler as an oath and promise by which he and his party would be bound. They even rejoiced in the hope that a State order was about to be erected that was very closely connected with the fundamentals of Christianity.

For a short time there was the appearance of a religious revival which had been started with the support of the party. In a remarkable manner there followed the re-entrance into the church of many who had been indifferent to it before. It was not unusual to find men with party uniforms among worshipers. At the first celebration of the National Day of Work, January 5, 1933, the confessional youth organization united harmoniously with the Hitler Jugend, which had not yet been declared as the "Staatsjugend." The festival service was attended by many who

wore party-group uniforms. It seemed that the church was going to have its opportunity for desirable effect on "the man in the brown uniform," instead of being suppressed by the party. This missionary fervor among the people soon had its end. Today, long after all these fond hopes were frozen, they have only a wistful memory of that youthful passion that once strengthened church and people. At that time it would have been blameworthy if church members had not arisen and prepared to meet what appeared to be an opportunity in the life of the church.

## II. THE GERMAN CHRISTIANS

To activate the preparation for the spiritual revival and to facilitate mutual co-operation between Church and State, the *Deutsche Christen* was organized. At the beginning it was not a party organization. Those affiliated with the movement were (1) the missionary groups who wanted the opportunity to work among the people in the interest of the church, (2) those whose interests in national affairs were related to the church, (3) the many who amused themselves with the intoxicating general ideas of the day without appreciation of their worth or meaning. At first the group had no commitment or obligation but it began to take on political significance and joined itself to the Nazi party. Political interests soon consumed the greater part of their activity, and the direction of the group was to lead the church to serve the political need. They gave their political ideals a sort of religious flavor in order to lend dignity to the Nazi party and gain a victory for it in Germany.

The *Deutsche Christen* went to the work of renovating the Evangelische Kirche with a great deal of energy. As a leader they nominated Ludwig Müller from Königsberg. Little had been known of him up to this time except that he was acquainted with Hitler and came from East Prussia. In April, 1933, he discussed the problems of a united German Protestant church in detail with Hitler and was given full power to act for him in Protestant church affairs. This gave a new status to the *Deutsche Christen* that was not implied before. The possibilities for good liaison with the Protestant churches was not strengthened by this new relation to the government, nor by the choice of Ludwig Müller, who lacked proven experience and the confidence of the church that might have made him acceptable and effective.

To further alienate Protestant hopes and even arouse distrust, a lawyer, Dr. Jäger, whose interests were purely in party principles, was



appointed the leader of church affairs in the Prussian Kulturministerium. The real church circles soon recognized that the party intended to use the church for its purposes instead of lending itself to achieve any spiritual aim. The hated word "*Gleichschaltung*," meaning political co-ordination, was applied to the church as it was to other departments of German life, and was a device of the party to concentrate all power within itself.

In order to confirm the representation of the church before the Reich ministry it was decided to hold elections in the synods. Preparation for the election took two different directions: first, the church's spiritual leaders took steps to guarantee leadership that was representative of the church, and then the Deutsche Christen began to put forward men with political leadership. The aged and faithful President von Hindenburg wrote a letter to Hitler, earnestly and solicitously reminding him of the rights of the church which he had promised to respect, and that attempts to influence the election from outside were thereby forbidden. Yet in June the Evangelical Press Association office and the church council offices in Berlin were entered and searched by the Storm Troopers. The secret police in Berlin confiscated pamphlets and publications concerning the proposed election. To the consternation of church people, on July 22, the day before the election, Hitler gave an address over a radio network advising that they vote for the Deutsche Christen.

On the basis of the synod elections, the delegates were called to Wittenberg on September 27, 1933, and Ludwig Müller was elected as Bishop of the Reich. This did not represent the real assent of the church; on the contrary, the faithful church circles felt themselves betrayed. Opposition was first shown by leaders of the congregations. Pastor Martin Niemöller of Berlin-Dahlem organized the opposition pastors (Pfarrer-notbund) for the defense of pastors not favorable to the Deutsche Christen. In Württemberg 150 pastors declared their exit from the Deutsche Christen movement. Indignation became evident throughout the church when Deutsche Christen speakers in the Sportsplatz in Berlin on November 13 revealed their lack of sympathy with the evangelical aims of the church and their own political party aims.

The leadership and influence of Müller became completely ineffective as he adopted arbitrary methods of administration that were a copy of Nazi procedures. The spiritual ministry attached to his office soon found it impossible to work with him. He declared his intention to unify the confessional churches by forcibly making them members of



the German National Church. This was to become effective on his orders but was declared illegal by the Berlin Landesgericht. The setback did not deter Müller; the work of faithful pastors began to be watched by the police. It became evident that since the party leaders could not organize the church for their purposes, they would accomplish its dissolution.

### III. THE CHURCH'S STRUGGLE

The opposition to Müller's church politics became so strong that party members were convinced that there could be no "political coordination" of the church. The Pfarrernotbund organized by Niemöller sent the Reichsbischof the names of 6,000 pastors expressing a vote of nonconfidence in the Administration. The Lutheran bishops presented an ultimatum in December, 1933, demanding Müller's withdrawal. As the issues between the church and the party became resolved and established, the congregations were determined in their resistance and prepared for the conflict by confessional services. The church lost a good advocate in the death of Hindenburg on September 2, 1934, who in his last days could no longer make himself heard in the government due to open disregard of his rights and desires. Müller was always able to extend his self-made ideas by the help of the party and the police.

The opposing spirit of the church was shown on various occasions. On September 15, 1934, a hateful attack on Bishop Meiser appeared in the Nuremberg newspaper, the *Frankische Tageszeitung*. It was written by Gauleiter Karl Holz and began: "Away with Landesbischof D. Meiser! He has become unfaithful, and a breaker of promises. His actions are contrary to the welfare of the people." The threats and the spirit of this article aroused a feeling among the church people that is without parallel in the history of the land. On the following day, Sunday, when Bishop Meiser preached at the morning service in the Matthäuskirche in Munich, a large demonstration followed in the street and before the church offices in favor of the maligned bishop. Another demonstration occurred in the afternoon at the completely jammed Barfüsserkirche in Augsburg when the bishop preached. During the next few days there were larger meetings in all the fifteen churches of Nuremberg. There was widespread interest in all churches throughout the country, and over 1,000 special services were held in order to encourage faithfulness to church fundamentals and the following of leaders who were bound by those fundamentals. These meetings were held in spite of the fact that

the pastors were closely observed by the party and police, because it was apparent that their existence as a church was threatened.

Soon afterward Bishop Wurm of Stuttgart was held in house arrest from the 6th to the 26th of October, 1934. Dr. Jäger with several guards searched the offices in Munich during Bishop Meiser's absence and arrested him on his return. Then the church in Bavaria was divided into two parts and put under chosen Deutsche Christen leaders. The people then began to seek relief from the government. A deputation of farmers representing over 200,000 members in Franken went to present their plea to Reichstatthalter Ritter von Epp. This man held his place as an advisor in the Ministry, but no information had been given him by the Ministry on what had been happening among the people, and he was astonished to hear their story. He presented their plea before the "Inner-ministerium" and this protest had good results; further outrages were stopped.

Simultaneously in Nuremberg, where Julius Streicher was in power, other relief was received. Following a meeting of 10,000 people in the Hitler Sportsplatz, where earnest proclamations were made, the pastors of Nuremberg and Fürth sought a consultation with the Gauleiter on October 17. The Rev. Daumiller was spokesman, and presented their case concerning the injustices of Drs. Jäger and Müller as well as their protests against unacceptable changes in the ritual and the communion service that were forced upon them by Deutsche Christen leaders who had no spiritual interest in the church. Streicher saw the intensity of feeling among the large group and recommended that the party cease to venture into church territory.

There seemed now to be a realization that, for the time being, the party could gain nothing by these violent acts of injustice. Bishops Wurm and Meiser were released from arrest on October 26. However, Müller, who had been installed as Reichsbischof three days previously, continued to hold this title, but with less influence.

But the party continued its policy in the direction of suppressing and countering the work of the church to the end of its eventual destruction. The State had been swallowed up by the Nazi party; right and justice were arbitrarily determined by the police. Heinrich Himmler as the head of the police used them as the executive branch of the party. The church stood alone.

The opponents of Christianity, having observed the active opposition

they had aroused, took stronger measures to prevent another popular uprising. They attempted to make it impossible for the church to inform and motivate its people in spiritual responsibilities. The first steps were general prohibitions that were often so indefinite that it was difficult to determine the local meaning. This made it possible for local party leaders to make the most thorough application in each situation according to their own interpretation.

The first prohibition that made it impossible for the church to wield any extensive influence was the prohibition against publishing anything in the secular or church press concerning the affairs of the Reich Ministry of the Interior, then under Dr. Frick (Nov. 6, 1934). A second prohibition was a ban on church meetings other than meetings held in a local church by its own members. The police progressively hampered the powers and activities of the church, but pastors and congregations continued to make known their sentiments even by illegal methods—since the principles of legality had been overthrown by the party and were no longer a guide to action. It was evident that the party intended to force the church out of public life. The time had come when the congregation must descend to a life in the catacombs.

The pressure of the party-state against the church was carried further when Rudolph Hess forbade all party officers to maintain church membership, April 4, 1936. In June the work of Bible colporteurs was forbidden. Also the arranging of church functions outside church rooms was prohibited. The party directed its policy to humiliating the church by impious remarks and discouraging party men and German youth from membership. Dr. Ley said, "On earth we believe only in Adolph Hitler." This was indeed the extent of Nazi philosophy.

The committee on church relations in the Reich Ministry of the Interior was so ineffective that after much conflict it was dissolved. Party control had progressed to the point when the public no longer dared to rise against the alarming changes in the spirit of justice and law. The position was stated in arbitrary terms: "Right is what serves the German people—what serves the Aryan man." Justice was usurped in a decision of the Prussian high court in April, 1937, that orders, decrees, and statutes of the Gestapo are incontestable. Martin Niemöller was sentenced to eight years in a concentration camp, and no defense by his friends even within the Wehrmacht and the party was of any avail in obtaining clemency—as the incarceration was said to be the

personal will of Hitler. Spiteful acts against pastors increased, imprisonments increased, resisters were economically strangled; the church, Christian doctrine, and the Bible were openly defamed. The position of the party in respect to the church was openly revealed and bitterly pursued. The declarations of Hitler wherein he had tried to court the church were now denied.

The interference with Christian education began as the confessional schools were altered into the so-called common schools. Religious instruction was relegated to the inconvenient or odd hours of the day. Teachers who had taught religious subjects for a long time were now forbidden to teach under penalty of severe punishment. Pastors alone were permitted to give religious instruction, and only after they had been examined as to their "Aryan" ancestry and their political "trustworthiness." The selection of pastors was very arbitrary and their permission to teach was often withdrawn at the whim of party leaders. At Württemberg 700 pastors refused to obey an order of the Culture Ministry to reduce some parts of the Old Testament to the ridiculous by altering certain stories concerning the Jews. Their right to teach religion was withdrawn because they had broken faith with the Führer. Religious instruction succumbed and even prayers in the schools were forbidden. On December 12, 1937, Reich Leader Rosenberg withdrew the right of rearing children from the church in spite of the fact that according to the census of April, 1939, ninety-five per cent of the German people claimed church membership.

The theological schools in Spandau and Bethel were closed. Faculties of the other schools were more and more fitted with men who were ready to bow to the wishes of the State, whereas those who were faithful to the church were more and more restricted in their activity.

The church life was further inhibited by restrictions that were placed on the far-reaching and popular church press. Organizations were prohibited from editing and publishing papers. This order was especially directed against church periodicals. Other periodicals had to cease publication because there was no allowance of paper. At the same time the schools and homes were flooded by well-bound books with excellent pictures showing the accomplishments of the Nazi party.

In the course of this conflict 800 pastors were taken into custody. The number of threats, warnings against preaching and giving religious instruction, attempts at intimidation, detentions by the Gestapo often

in the most humiliating way and by most inept men, can never be ascertained. The majority of pastors who were faithful to the church will be able to tell of their own dangerous experiences.

#### IV. THE WAR AND AFTERWARD

At the outbreak of the war, the church expected to perform its duty of soul care through worship, comfort to the wounded, and ministry to soldiers in their stresses. Provisions existed for a ministry in the field and hospital but it was very ineffective. Connections were held with a certain number of reasonable and Christian commanders, but with the growing influx of party officers (Schutzstaffel) the religious influence in all elements of the army was sidestepped and pushed out.

In the first weeks of the war pastors were forbidden to publish the names and addresses of the members in military service, for the reason of military security. They were particularly forbidden to send their soldier members any religious materials such as might maintain a soldier's interest in his home church. Providing such literature was said to be a duty of the chaplain, but there were few chaplains in the army. Ministers and priests who were effective for combat duty were called into military service in the same manner as other soldiers. Ministers above thirty-five years of age were eligible for duty as a chaplain if they were politically acceptable and there was any need for their services. There was a vacancy for two chaplains in each division but many commanders did not desire any chaplains, so the call for chaplains ceased quite early in the war.

Another disturbing change perpetrated by the State at a time when the church was not in a very good position to adjust itself was the upset of the old custom of collecting the church tax at the same time the State tax was collected. This had been done by the State without much added book work. But in 1942 the church was forced to set up its own offices to collect the church tax. It was forbidden that factories and offices should collect it for the church, even where it would be done willingly by the management.

In 1940 the Reich Education Minister made known that in consideration of the demands of war, religious instruction in the upper classes of higher schools would be discontinued. When churches tried to institute a period for religious instruction outside the schoolroom and outside of schoolhouses, it was strictly forbidden.



The Protestantism of Germany is exhausted and shudders from the sufferings of these distressing times that can only be termed a period of persecution. The church, being bound by the gospel, acknowledges its omissions and errors, and is ready to accept judgment and even to blame itself with a harshness unpermissible to those standing on the outside. It was a comfort to know that the Evangelical world, both in neutral and enemy lands, sympathetically and prayerfully remembered them. On the other hand, it pained them to hear condemnation from churches of other lands who had no knowledge or experience of the unprecedented terror of a Gestapo and Schutzstaffel. Nor was it of any value to receive easy advice as to how to deal with the situation and win, when martyrs have labored and lost.

There is no boasting—but there have been many witnesses who were faithful in their dealings with the Gestapo, in prisons and in camps, and some have sealed their faithfulness in death. Even some party members, especially those disappointed idealists who went in during the first wave, protected the church and defended it against many evil attacks at the cost of their own personal well-being. Where there has been much suffering and some have turned away, there has arisen in many a great humility and a new hunger for eternal things. They have marveled at the wonders and the grace of God in thousands of cases, and particularly that the church was not annihilated by the threatening powers. They look with hope for the help of churches in other lands to quench the fire of hatred in people's lives through the love rooted in the redemption of Christ.

Perhaps the greatest statement of the contrite and hopeful spirit that characterizes the humble German churchman came from Bishop Dr. Meiser of Ansbach, Bavaria. It was written to be read in each church in his area as his message to the people. I have translated it as follows:

"In the twelve years now behind us, I have at various difficult times directed a word to you. At those times I spoke of the need and the distress of the church. As I speak to you today, I have before me a picture of the unspeakable suffering and distress of the whole German people. Never in our history has this people been cast into such depths; never has it been so near the abyss of extinction.

"Where is there a home in Germany today in which care, anxiety, need, temptation, and despair have not entered as dark guests? Who may count the millions of names of those who were sacrifices of the



war and now lie buried in strange grounds or on the bottom of the ocean, or who died in hospitals amidst great pain and suffering? How long will it be before we have information concerning the many, many missing and captured? From how many will there never be a word? What a picture of destruction is found in our many cities and villages! Where are all the homeless? How do these, who often only saved the clothes they wore, maintain their life? When will the separated families once more be united? Who will once more give our youth—now comparable to a destroyed garden—cleanness of heart, and a sense of reverence? Who will be concerned about the aged, the lonely, the weak, and give them a glimpse of light in their darkness? When we consider these things, we see a sea of sorrow and suffering that threatens to drown many.

"Indeed, there is an armistice. Some of the pressure, some anxiety has been lifted from us. But we would be deceiving ourselves if we imagined that we had come to the end of all our distress. New needs arise, new distresses announce themselves. We have been taken into a bitterly severe school. None can escape it. We should not attempt to escape it. For it is God's school in which we stand.

"We would be smitten with blindness, if we did not acknowledge that it is God's judgment that is now going out over the world. Upon the entire world, upon our own group, upon each of us personally. This fact we must accept. Other people and other lands will have to come to terms with the judgment that is come upon them. We cannot evade the seriousness of our situation by comparing our needs with those of other lands, and perhaps finally come to the state where we begin judging. We are not the judges. The judge is God; the Lord, alone. It is our duty to bow to his judgment. When we do that, we will confess with the prophet Daniel: 'We have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces' (Dan. 9:5-7). Words have been spoken in our midst against the exalted majesty of God, which could have originated only in the spirit of the abyss; deeds have been committed which could only have been the froth of hell; uncountable ones of our own people and other peoples and races will rise to accuse. Who will stand before God? Today all may see where it leads, when a people that has received many blessings from God breaks with its best

traditions. If the first commandment, that we fear, love, and trust in God above all things, is disregarded, then there is no sanctifying of the Lord's day, no authority of parents, no sanctity in marriage, no consideration for human life, property, honor, and justice. Then the door has been thrown open to taking whatever is the neighbor's, according to the rule of taking what one needs, and not according to God's commandments.

"Therefore the destruction of all that had been so eagerly built had to follow. God's word will remain true: 'Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people' (Prov. 14:34). 'Be not deceived, God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap' (Gal. 6:7).

"There was no lack of attempts to remind the people and their rulers of their responsibility to God. But it seemed as though one were speaking into the wind. Earnest and urgent as the admonitions were, they nevertheless found reception with few. It is for that reason we are being so severely chastised now. We sowed to the wind of evil and are reaping the storm of distress.

"If ever our people are to find well-being, and if they are to develop toward the good life, it will come only if all false pride and self-glorification, all evil spirits and idols are once and for all set aside. Therefore we are exhorting our people and congregations: Return home to God. Learn once more to ask what his will is, and bow to his ordinances! Listen no longer to the siren voices of false prophets, accept counsel and advice only from the Lord. Do not be deceived anew, nor be led astray by the idea of '*Weltanschauung*' spawned by erring people, but let the holy, eternal word of God, let law and gospel according to the revelation of Holy Scripture be a light unto your path and a lamp for your feet. Be no longer despisers of the holy Sacraments! Restore the holy ordinance of Sunday, which the people have trodden under foot so long! For faith comes by preaching (Rom. 10:17). Bring up your children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, and do not rob their souls of the best that you can give them, the one thing needful. In all your endeavors, remember the admonition of the Lord: 'What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?' (Matt. 16:26). Renew and nourish acknowledged Christian customs in the home and in the public life! In no Christian home let there be lacking the table prayers, the morning and evening prayers. Christian families are the hope of our church and our people. Enough of shallow-

ness and this worldliness! Pray in this pentecostal time with the whole Church for a renewal of hearts through the power of the Holy Spirit, in order that it may be said once more of our people: 'I will say to them which were not my people, Thou art my people' (Hosea 2:23). 'I will be betrothed with thee eternally.'

"Although God has overrun us in his anger and placed us under his judgment, we know that he does not judge as man does. He is not a God of vengeance, nor is his will a will of annihilation. He indeed chastises us, but according to measure. Even more zealous than his anger is his mercy. Indeed he must reward us according to our desert, but above his exacting justice stands his forgiveness. As down payment of his forgiving love, he has given his only Son for us. For Jesus' sake, let us firmly believe that God does not finally denounce a lost world and will not completely cast off a people sunken into blame and corruption. 'For as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him' (Ps. 103:13).

"Let us flee to God's mercy when the weight of our guilt and care, when the bitterness of our poverty, the distress of our homelessness, and the sorrow and heartbreak would threaten to crush us.

"From God's mercy let us learn to be merciful to one another. Deal your bread to the hungry, and take those in distress into your homes. And so, brothers and sisters, help those in distress, who in the midst of the ruins of their homes are threatened by the collapse of their existence. Hatred and vengeance has been preached sufficiently from the pulpit. Let us not forget whose children we are.

"And then let us jointly take hold of the work of purifying the corrupted law-code, of preparing a new home for ourselves, to clarify the ordinances that have degenerated into error, to rebuild our destroyed homes, and thus heal the wounds that the war has caused. Let us not despair but hope in the Lord. 'It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. . . . For the Lord will not cast us off for ever: but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies' (Lam. 3:22-23, 31-32)."

# Biblical Theology and the Sermon on the Mount

ALEXANDER C. PURDY

*Dr. Purdy explores the delicate problem of the relation between historical criticism and theology, as it affects our understanding of the Sermon on the Mount.*

THE PURPOSE of this discussion is threefold. First, to evaluate briefly the current revival of biblical theology. Second, to consider the relevance of biblical theology to the Sermon on the Mount. The method used will be a comparison of three points of view as represented by Klausner in his book *Jesus of Nazareth*, Bacon in *Studies in Matthew*, and Dibelius in *The Sermon on the Mount*, to show the role played by biblical theology in each treatment. Third, to draw conclusions as to the relation which should obtain between historical and critical studies, on the one hand, and theological studies, on the other.

## I

The discipline known as biblical theology has largely vanished from our theological curricula although courses on the religion of Jesus, of Paul, and of the New Testament embody much of the material formerly treated as New Testament theology. The reasons for the obsolescence of this formal discipline are too well known to require detailed discussion. Categories derived from systematic theology, e.g. God, Christ, the Spirit, man, eschatology, ethics, and the like, tempted the student to produce results in terms imposed upon the records and to state his conclusions in the vocabulary and thought forms of contemporary theological debate. Studies in the history of religion made it clear that the New Testament writings are deeply rooted in the soil of the first century, Jewish and Hellenistic, and are not to be understood by forcing them to stand and deliver ammunition for current theological discussion.

Furthermore, this discipline assumes that our records are "systems of doctrine" (*Lehrbegriffe*), an assumption contrary to fact. They are rather tracts, letters, and gospels in which a systematic treatment of doctrine is subordinated to the practical needs of the churches. The

rise of the social-historical school and of form-criticism has emphasized this turning away from biblical theology by stressing the sociological factor, "the seat in life," as important for the interpretation of the records.

The re-emergence of biblical theology, in fact if not in form, is accordingly one of the most striking phenomena of current New Testament studies. The Barthian influence has been credited with this revival. Accepting the results of literary and historical criticism, in some cases even the more extreme results, the Barthians have combined biblicism with the crisis theology to produce amazing and to some scholars dismaying conclusions. But it should not be forgotten that the present state of New Testament studies is congenial to such a reading of the records. It is now widely held that the New Testament writers are not interested in history as such; that Mark, long regarded as the sole basis for a "life" of Jesus, is quite as theological in purpose as the Fourth Gospel; and that from beginning to end, the New Testament never presents facts as facts but always faith's attitude to facts.

Other possible reasons for the revival of biblical theology may be noted. New Testament studies have reached something like a state of pause, not that there is agreement in results but that the materials and criteria for arriving at judgments have been pretty well canvassed and that final conclusions are not likely to be achieved. Form criticism has attempted to probe the period of oral transmission; and its results, while illuminating, are subjective. If precise historical conclusions as to the origin of Christianity are uncertain, the fact remains that it emerged as a living, vital faith. Now such a faith is desperately needed in our troubled times. It is natural and praiseworthy, as well as justifiable, that scholars should sense this need and should be influenced by it in their examinations of the records. For these and other reasons we are witnessing a revival of interest in the theology of the New Testament.

## II

The Sermon on the Mount is perhaps the most significant New Testament section on which to observe the impact of current theology, not only because of its important place in Christian thought but also because it contains a minimum of explicit theology. Dibelius writes: "The very first glance seems to indicate that the Sermon on the Mount has nothing to do with this larger message of the Incarnation, Salvation,

and Redemption,"<sup>1</sup> and again, "The Sermon on the Mount, it is true, does not have a strongly marked Christology."<sup>2</sup> On the one hand, the small amount of explicit theological teaching and on the other, the emphasis on human attitudes and human conduct have given rise to the view that we possess in the Sermon another and different source—from the Pauline letters, for example—for estimating the original message of Jesus and the nature of the Christian message at its inception. Adolf Harnack held that the Sermon gives evidence of a stage in early Christianity when definite Christological ideas had not yet developed. Tolstoi went even further in affirming that the Sermon is not only not Christological but that it does not involve theological concepts in any form, being the explication of "the eternal law." The so-called man-in-the-street tends to find the simplicity of the Sermon in striking contrast to theological subtleties, and, forgetting the radical nature of its teaching, to say that if the churches would preach and practice those teachings and avoid theological hair-splitting the world would be a better place to live in.

A preliminary word about the current state of critical opinion as regards the Sermon on the Mount will be in place. Even if the relatively nontheological character of the Sermon can be established, it does not follow that we have in these chapters a witness to the original message of Jesus, shorn of all the theological interpretations that later overlaid his simple teaching about human conduct. That the passage of time and the exigencies of church problems shaped the faith of the earliest followers of Jesus can be demonstrated. It is quite another thing, however, to claim that we possess in the Sermon the original pure nugget of his teaching. No doubt Jesus taught something definite—that this was a consistent system is an assumption—and no doubt what Jesus taught was variously interpreted as time went on. But to assume a straight line of genetic development is to impose upon our records a theory that they do not sustain. From the viewpoint of sheer historicism we are forced to the conclusion that there were several lines of development rather than a straight and single line. Yet Christianity did exhibit a remarkable unity which can only be accounted for in terms of faith. If this is true, the history of the faith of the earliest Christians becomes quite as significant for Christianity as the attempt to discover an in-

<sup>1</sup> Martin Dibelius, *The Sermon on the Mount* (Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1940), p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 80.



disputable nugget of historic fact, an attempt that so far has eluded the methods of historical criticism. This apparently negative result from the viewpoint of historical criticism thus justifies the biblical theologian in his attempt to evaluate the records.

Something like agreement has been reached on several other critical questions that have a bearing on the theology of the Sermon. It is pretty generally agreed that Matthew's account of the Sermon is a compilation either by the author or his sources or both. The arguments upon which this conclusion rests have been well summarized by Dibelius<sup>8</sup> and need not be repeated here. It is also generally agreed that Matthew's record when critically compared with the parallel discourse in Luke 6:20-49 witnesses to a source common to both. Both discourses begin with Beatitudes, close with the same parable, and are followed by the same incident, i.e. the centurion's servant, which is not derived from Mark. In this common material three major notes are sounded: first, the promise of the Kingdom expressed in Beatitudes; second, the command to love one's enemy and the prohibition of retaliation; third, sundry sayings about judging, good trees and good fruit, followed by the exhortation to be doers and not hearers only, enforced by the parable of the two builders. It is further agreed that the Sermon contains little if any material that is brand new in the sense that it cannot be paralleled in some form in Old Testament, Apocrypha, or Rabbinic sources. And finally, there would be considerable agreement on two further points: first, that Jesus was regarded as a teacher, for both Mark and Paul, each in his own way, confirm this; and second, that we possess in the Sermon the characteristic features of his teaching.

No such agreement has been reached as to Jesus' attitude toward the Law of Moses. Matthew's presentation in 5:17-20 and in the antitheses that follow can with difficulty be harmonized with Mark's repudiation of the dietary laws in 7:14-15 (although Matthew can include this saying, Matt. 15:10-11). Matthew 5:18-19 are especially difficult and the commentators resort to various devices in the attempt to dispose of these verses. We shall see later that Jesus' attitude toward the Law of Moses continues to be an important item in the theological interpretation of the Sermon. It would be agreed, however, that the Sermon checks with our other sources for Jesus' teaching, in representing him as not bound by the literal wording of the Law.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

In discussing the question of the theological implications of the Sermon on the Mount, we may clear the ground by indicating a further general area of agreement. The ethics of the Sermon are set forth in typical Hebrew-Jewish form. Aristotle made his ethics a section in his larger work on Politics. The Sermon on the Mount is based on the Will of God and its sanction is the Kingdom of Heaven. There are only passing appeals to common sense, rationality, utility, proverbial wisdom (e.g. 6:27-34; the last verse seems strangely anticlimactic). The command, "Love your enemies," is based solely on the example of God's acts in nature and upon the rewards that God gives or withholds. The effect of such love upon the enemy, which Paul indicates in Romans 12:20, is conspicuously lacking. The God of the Sermon is a living, active Will working out his purposes in history, whose commands are self-authenticating. There is not the slightest suggestion of a new or different sanction for behavior arising from a new or different conception of God, of duty, of wisdom, or of utility. The sanction for conduct is thoroughly Hebrew-Jewish. To find in the Sermon a revelation of an eternal law as Tolstoi did, and as many since his day have, is to abandon all pretense of interpreting it in its historical setting.

### III

Two interrelated theological questions, Christology and Eschatology, constantly emerge in the study of the Sermon on the Mount. It may be helpful at this point to compare several scholars and their conclusions. For example, Klausner's well-known words: "We can aver . . . that throughout the Gospels there is not one item of ethical teaching which cannot be paralleled either in the Old Testament, the Apocrypha, or in the Talmudic and Midrashic literature of the period near to the time of Jesus"<sup>4</sup> are preceded in the same context by an equally positive and apparently contradictory judgment: "Not all of these sayings may have been uttered by Jesus, but they are all in accordance with his spirit and they are all of distinct originality." What Klausner means by originality is made clear in later passages.

But there is a new thing in the Gospels. Jesus, who concerned himself with neither Halakha, nor the secular knowledge necessary for Halakha, nor (except to a limited extent) with scriptural exposition—Jesus gathered together and, so to speak, condensed and concentrated ethical teachings in such a fashion as to

<sup>4</sup> Joseph Klausner, *Jesus of Nazareth* (The Macmillan Company, 1925), p. 384.

make them more prominent than in the Talmudic Haggada and the Midrashim, where they are interspersed among more commonplace discussions and worthless matter . . . the ethical teachings of the Gospel . . . came from one man only, and are, every one, stamped with the same peculiar hall-mark. A man like Jesus, for whom the ethical ideal was everything, was something hitherto unheard of in the Judaism of the day.<sup>5</sup>

(It is only fair to point out that Klausner regards this exclusive pre-occupation with the ethical ideal as a weakness in Jesus.)

How does Klausner explain the ethical "originality" of Jesus? On Christological and therefore eschatological grounds. His argument runs as follows. From the moment of baptism Jesus regarded himself as the Messiah. This did not mean that Jesus thought of himself as God or as the Son of God, for being a Jew he did not associate the Messiah with the Godhead. It did mean, however, that Jesus mistakenly held that the Kingdom was "at hand," indeed that it was already in existence in the world. This accounts for his

. . . extremist and individualistic ethic which neither society, state, nor nation could endure. . . . This twofold misapprehension of Jesus perpetuated his memory and created Christianity. . . . By this belief of Jesus his kingdom did in reality become "not of this world." Through his oversteering of the divine Fatherhood, Jesus, in the thought of the next Christian generation, became in spite of himself, the Son of God; and, later, to those converted from paganism, he became God himself. Yet again, through the preaching of his messianic claims, after he had failed to manifest himself to the world, in his power and glory, he became, in spite of himself, a "sacrifice," a "ransom for many."<sup>6</sup>

Thus Klausner attributes the peculiar character of Jesus' ethical teaching solely to theological causes: the messianic consciousness of Jesus, entailing the conviction that the Kingdom is already present in the world and that accordingly only ethical-religious teaching is important—political, economic, and social teaching being rendered irrelevant by the presence of the Kingdom.

Bacon in his important and too-little studied work, *Studies in Matthew*, does not, so far as I am able to discover, deal directly with the Christological and eschatological questions. Nevertheless his position is clear. Approaching the Sermon from the conviction that it is to be understood in terms of the dominant purpose of the First Evangelist, he finds that Matthew sets

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 389.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 405.

the main body of the discourse whose subject we define as Filial Righteousness . . . over against the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. This background or foil, exaggerated by our anti-Pharisaic evangelist, has almost disappeared in Luke, whose Gentile readers were more concerned with the contrast between the Church and the world than between Church and Synagogue.<sup>7</sup>

Bacon further holds that Matthew's presentation of Jesus' attitude to the Law of Moses is substantially historical as against that of Mark and Luke. He sees the Sermon, accordingly, as "the new ethic of Jesus" derived from his understanding of the Law. It is Jesus' interpretation of the Law that is the unique contribution of the Sermon, and Matthew's account achieved enormous success "largely because in general background and mold of thought it *did* represent the actual preaching of Jesus,"<sup>8</sup> allowing of course for the anti-Pharisaic bias of Matthew. In his final chapter on "The Messianic Judgment" Bacon makes clear that Jesus held a realistic view of the impending Day of Jehovah. "With John the coming of the Kingdom was immanent."<sup>9</sup> But he does not regard the eschatology of Jesus as the determinative factor in his ethical teaching. The crucial question for Bacon is Jesus' attitude toward the Law. Unlike the Fourth Gospel in which Jesus claims divine authority as over against the scribes, the Sermon on the Mount derives its sanction from what Bacon calls "the living Torah." He cites the "despised Samaritan, obedient to no Torah save the inward voice of humanity and mercy" as illustrative of this living Torah which "on the word of Jesus, has more divine authority than that of priest or Levite who neglect 'the weightier matters of the Law.'" It is what he *finds* in the Scriptures, not his sacerdotal or legal proficiency, which distinguishes Jesus' attitude toward the Torah from that of the scribes."<sup>10</sup> What Jesus finds in Torah, according to Bacon, is the demand for Filial Righteousness. "All parts of the discourse alike, exordium, theme, and application, are visibly dominated by the characteristic feature of Jesus' religious thought, his unswerving faith in the all-wise, all-loving, all-controlling Father in heaven."<sup>11</sup>

Bacon's emphasis upon Jesus' fundamental insight into the character of God, largely unsupported by other theological considerations, as the key to an understanding of the Sermon is in striking contrast to Klausner's position. It must be somewhat confusing to the layman, if these

<sup>7</sup> Benjamin W. Bacon, *Studies in Matthew* (Henry Holt, 1930), pp. 342, 343.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 435.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 429.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 360.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 345.

matters are ever called to his attention, to find a Jewish scholar who hangs everything on Christology and eschatology, and a Christian scholar who takes the opposite position.

Let us consider one more scholarly judgment on the question of the theology of the Sermon. Dibelius' treatment<sup>12</sup> deserves more detailed discussion than space affords. It may, however, be briefly summarized. Although the Sermon contains almost no explicit Christology, the presence of this material in the Gospel is due, Dibelius holds, to the fact that "it was Jesus who proclaimed these sayings." "No rabbinic pronouncement ever became authoritative for the world outside Judaism. Only the relatively small group of sayings collected in the Sermon on the Mount has won authority for millions of men." The solution of this problem lies in the distinction between the situation before Easter and after Easter. Jesus' intention was to "proclaim the absolute will of God and to announce the Kingdom of Heaven. According to the Synoptists it would seem that Jesus did not say anything about his own authority or Messiahship, as least he did not do so as a rule."<sup>13</sup>

But perhaps Form-Criticism can protect us from radical skepticism at this point. It is the supposition of Form-Criticism that the tradition handed down in the Synoptic Gospels was formulated in terms of the Christian faith and for the requirements of this faith. Therefore it is quite natural that all allusions of our Lord to his Messiahship were transformed by the Evangelists into Christian confessions in the time after Easter. Hence we have no real reason to draw a skeptical conclusion from the fact that the relevant passages express Christian convictions, and it is not necessary to take for granted that Jesus did not make any allusions to his Messiahship at all. It is probable, rather, that the question who would be king of the coming Kingdom was before his followers during his lifetime and that his listeners had at least a vague impression of their Master's higher authority.<sup>14</sup>

After Easter these sayings "became the Law which the heavenly Lord has given. Now, however, the Lord has also given his Holy Spirit in order to strengthen his disciples and to fit them for a life according to the will of God, but within the limitations of an earthly existence."<sup>15</sup>

According to Dibelius, the nature and content of the Sermon is due to the eschatological character of its orientation. It is an announcement of the "pure will of God" and the sayings themselves, like the miracles, are signs of the coming Kingdom. By "pure will of God," Dibelius means the will of God without regard to man's ability to perform it and

<sup>12</sup> Dibelius. *op. cit.*, pp. 79ff.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 81.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.



without reference to the imitations of man's earthly existence. "We are not able to *perform* it in its full scope, but we are able to *be transformed by it*."<sup>16</sup>

To summarize these three interpretations, we may say that Klausner and Dibelius are more theological than Bacon. Klausner emphasizes the (to him) exaggerated stress on the "ethical ideal," divorced from the social and national framework and thinks this is due to the Messianic consciousness of Jesus which led him to suppose mistakenly that the Kingdom was a present reality. Bacon stresses neither the Messianic nor the eschatological sanction of the Sermon, holding that Jesus was expounding the "living Torah" of "filial righteousness" as over against Pharisaic literalism. Dibelius, holding that the Messianic consciousness is uncertain, emphasizes the eschatological sanction as determinative.

#### IV

What are we to conclude as to the role of theology in interpreting the Sermon on the Mount? First, that all three interpreters illustrate both the values and the dangers of biblical theology. The uniqueness and the significance of the Sermon are clearly set forth by each in his own way. It is legitimate and apparently it is inescapable to interpret this body of teaching in terms of the total understanding of Jesus held by each interpreter. The student, however, should observe carefully the precise point at which the interpreter becomes theologian, abandoning his role as critic and assuming the role of theologian. The two disciplines are obviously interrelated, at least in the case of the Sermon on the Mount. Whether it is ever possible to pursue an objective study of historical records apart from the larger context of those records is a question beyond the scope of this paper. It may be confidently affirmed, however, that it is quite impossible to interpret the Sermon on the Mount apart from its theological implications. The materials in the Sermon do not afford explicit theological sanctions, except in part. Klausner perhaps illustrates this necessity most strikingly. Finding the content of the Sermon to be thoroughly Jewish, he is compelled to explain the particular synthesis of Jewish teaching achieved by Jesus in Christological and so in eschatological terms. But Bacon and Dibelius, and we might add every other interpreter, faces similar theological necessities.

A second observation may well be that the biblical theologian is

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.



under obligation to use the categories he borrows from theology with the same scrutiny employed in all critical studies. For example, Dibelius repeatedly uses the phrase "the pure will of God" as the key to an understanding of the radical ethic of the Sermon.

What we have before us are radical commands, an expression of the pure will of God, in no way weakened by the consideration of human necessities. This radicalism is an eschatological one. *Because* Jesus considers the Kingdom of God alone, he finds it possible to leave all worldly affairs, all human requirements, all the circumstances of the human life out of consideration. This interpretation holds good also for the other radical commands of the Sermon on the Mount. They express an absolute demand for the renunciation of all things which might separate man from God and his Kingdom.<sup>17</sup>

Now the use of the phrase "the pure will of God" introduces a non-biblical idea that must be critically examined. Most scholars would agree with Dibelius that the "radicalism of the Sermon is an eschatological one." But this phrase and its interpretation introduce a type of eschatological theory that is not explicit in the Sermon, which certainly does not explain the radical character of the teaching in terms of "the pure will of God." It is precisely this explanation that is introduced. Dibelius may be theologically correct, but it is of great importance to see that his explanation is not inherent in the text.

It is instructive in this connection to quote a modern Jewish writer on the Old Testament prophets:

The prophet is conscious of having been called of God to proclaim to men the one absolute message that comes from God, and it is with it and its demands on his lips that he comes forth to men. What distinguishes him is not that he claims to predict the future nor even that he is under compulsion to speak. These would not mark him off from others. What sets him apart is that it is *the commandment of God* that he must preach to men, and his predictions refer only to that future which is determined by the fear of God and disregard of him. He is "full of power by the spirit of the Lord" (Jer. 1:7), so that his theme is and can only be righteousness and wickedness. The inward compulsion and the inward conviction have assumed a moral character. Therefore it is always the categorical imperative that he utters. He cannot soften it down nor omit any part of it. He never bargains with the world nor concludes a compromise with it. He can afford to be indifferent to what men call facts, to what they regard as success and victory.<sup>18</sup>

Now it can be argued that this picture of the Hebrew prophet conveys precisely the same accent we find in the Sermon on the Mount, and

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>18</sup> Rabbi Leo Baeck in *Religions of the World*, Carl Clemen, editor (Harcourt, Brace and Company), pp. 266, 267.

accounts for the radicalism that Dibelius so rightly emphasizes. It is to be observed, however, that there is a subtle but very clear difference. The difference can be put in this way: the Jewish scholar holds that the prophet announces the will of God as a categorical imperative—it must be obeyed without reference “to what men call facts, to what they regard as success and victory.” Dibelius, on the contrary, holds that the will of God itself is “pure,” i.e. indifferent to human limitations and human conditioning. The absoluteness is shifted from an absolute obedience to an absolute will. Dibelius’ view may be true, but his reading of the Sermon introduces an entire theological outlook which must be carefully examined in its own right. The Sermon on the Mount does not require this particular theological concept, as the comparison with the Old Testament prophets proves. The theological concept as well as the data of the Sermon must be critically evaluated.

## V

The outcome of this brief study may be stated in three propositions. First, historical and literary criticism is essential to but inadequate for an understanding of the Sermon on the Mount. Second, theology is inherent in the Sermon and cannot be avoided in any interpretation of it. Third, the theological interpretation must be completely integrated with the historical and literary criticism of the records, since the temptation is very strong to integrate theology—the theology of the records—with some current system. The Sermon still stands above its interpreters as a proclamation of the will of God demanding personal decision.

# Some Ethical Aspects of Atomic Energy

HENRY NORRIS RUSSELL

*How shall man avoid the peril of the forces of nature he has unleashed? A scientist appraises the ethical dangers both in destructive and possible constructive use of atomic energy.*

DESPITE the torrents of words—spoken and written—about atomic energy which have flooded the world in the past year, there are some points that still remain to be emphasized. What follows is written by one who has never had any “classified” information, and so may speak freely on the basis of released data.

Fairly full understanding of these data is necessary for an intelligent opinion. Fortunately, nontechnical presentation is now available to the general reader in *One World or None*,<sup>1</sup> which leaves nothing to be desired as regards completeness and reliability. Each of the many authors of the short chapters is a primary authority in its field; they are the men who really know, and there is no reason to look further for the “last word.” The eighty pages could be read at a sitting if anyone were tough-minded enough to withstand their cumulative impact.

One interested solely in the advance of science (assuming, contrary to fact, that such a denatured individual existed) would greet the new knowledge with exultation mingled with awe. In the exploding bomb, man has succeeded in producing, though but for an instant, temperatures, pressures, and a general physical situation that is without known parallel anywhere in the universe. Under controllable conditions the newly available energy has made possible the artificial production of eight chemical elements which were previously unknown—most of them probably in amounts sufficient for detailed study. Information on what has been accomplished in the production of short-lived radioactive atoms is but partially released. There is, however, good reason to believe that these may be of great value to the physicist and chemist in their studies

<sup>1</sup> McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1946.

of matter, to the biologist in the investigation of processes occurring in the living body, and to the physician in the treatment of disease.

So far, the account is highly favorable; but there is another side. These prodigious new powers are not foolproof. Indeed, they are much farther from being foolproof than anything that has previously entered human experience; and the consequences of folly in dealing with them are appalling.

The urgent problem does not arise from the fact that men are now in possession of knowledge of these amazing and fascinating phenomena, but from doubt whether men can handle this knowledge with sufficient intellectual and moral self-control to avert a host of calamities. It is not a scientific problem at all, it is social and, above all, ethical.

The most futile of all reactions toward this problem is regret that it exists. The desire for a foolproof society or a foolproof world is at best an escape-reaction. It is not easy to imagine a foolproof world, but we can be sure of one thing about it. By the law of survival, such a world would soon come to be inhabited mainly, if not solely, by fools.

It appears to be generally true that nothing can be had without a price. For example, a tiny one-celled organism can divide into two and so multiply indefinitely, forming a host of successors, none of which need die, save for some external reason. But a complex many-celled organism cannot survive indefinitely. It can be parent to others of its kind, but must die. Only extremely complex organisms rise to the level of consciousness. Hence it may fairly be said from the evolutionary standpoint that the individuals of our race, having died for millions of generations, have at last their reward: we *know* that we shall die.<sup>2</sup> Death is the price of knowledge—and knowledge is worth the price.

Similarly and even more clearly, sin, and hell, if there be one, are the price of conscious self-determination—of freedom. But there is a great difference here. We *have* to die, but we do not have to be damned, in this world or the next.

Now we may begin to see that the "control" of nature, of which modern mankind has been so inordinately proud, has also its price—the many and great perils with which atomic energy brings us face to face. But we do not have to succumb. There is a way out—or more than one—and the responsibility for finding the way is ours. We face a challenge, not a doom; and we must meet it responsibly.

<sup>2</sup> I owe this to a conversation with my friend Professor E. G. Conklin.

The greatest danger is the deliberate use of atomic energy for destructive purposes. The appalling efficiency of the atomic bomb is known to everyone; and all but the ignorant or self-deceived realize that no effective defense is possible against a serious attack. If the materials for making such bombs could be easily and secretly mined and processed, and if small but nevertheless devastating bombs could be made, the prospect would indeed be desperate. Small groups of determined men—perhaps embittered by defeat and seeking only for revenge; perhaps fanatically eager to impose their will upon an unconvinced majority; or perhaps merely criminal and reckless, hoping to gain advantage from the collapse of orderly government—might wreck the fabric of our society. But Nature—or Providence—gives us a respite. The fissionable materials must either be synthesized artificially, or separated by highly complicated processes. A large quantity of them is required to make a bomb, and the construction of one—though a closely and wisely guarded secret—is known to be intricate and difficult.

This leaves us still the masters of our fate—provided that we have wisdom enough to establish effective international means of control; discernment enough to provide adequate methods of inspection; self-control enough to place the safety of the world above the temptations of material advantage; and courage and energy enough to secure the adoption of these safeguards while there is yet time.

A successful international agreement must be the product of negotiation and compromise. The adjustment must be made between groups which differ sincerely regarding weighty matters, such as freedom of speech and of public information. Mutual toleration, with neither party expecting to convert the other, is clearly the way of peace.

Among the obstacles to this are perfectionism, which will compromise nothing that stands in the way of a particular set of hopes and standards, and appeasement, which compromises anything, including the future, for "peace in our time." We should know by this time where appeasement ends. But if we give up perfectionism, we may have to abandon the hope of seeing, in our lifetime, the disappearance of some things that we, but not our neighbors, regard as evil. As in so many problems of practical morality, we have to balance the relative disadvantages of alternatives, and the great increase in the destructiveness of war weights the scale on the side of tolerance. An international agreement, once reached, cannot, and should not, be casually amended from year to year. Human

nature being what it is, it is inevitable that the conference that forms the agreement will be full of jockeying for advantage, great or small. A nation which refrains from sending its very ablest and most experienced negotiators, because some of them differ from the party in power upon internal issues, throws away much of its own case, and endangers the cause of others as well.

The international agreement will be ineffective if it does not include thoroughgoing means for inspection of atomic power plants. Dr. Condon's chapter on "The Technique of Private War"<sup>3</sup> gives an alarming picture of the mischief that could be done by groups working under cover, if they could lay their hands on fissionable material, either by the connivance of corrupt or fanatical inspectors or the negligence of inefficient ones. Considerable, though not unlimited, sacrifice of both national and individual pride and exclusiveness is necessary to assure real safety. The proposals that have recently been made by Mr. Baruch and his associates, and the widespread approval with which they have met, are highly encouraging. The suggested scheme bids fair to afford a high degree of protection at a surprisingly small cost of national *amour propre*. If it fails—which may heaven forbid!—the world will at least know where to place the blame.

The danger increases rapidly with the number of people who have lawful access to fissionable material, except in very small amounts, and even then under strict accountability. The authors of the book cited above give their personal views, and do not always agree, but four of them (Condon, Langmuir, Szilard, and Urey) recommend strongly that, until effective and trustworthy international control is an accomplished fact, the utilization of atomic energy for industrial purposes should be completely prohibited; and no one takes the opposite side. The possibility of systematic pilfering of bomb-making materials, concealed under the guise of "operating losses" by miscreants of one sort or another, and the resulting dangers far outweigh, in the judgment of these experts, the economic advantage of "atomic power."

This conclusion is likely to surprise readers who have derived their ideas from the romantic pictures drawn by popular writers.

The plain fact is that the material advantages that are likely to result from the availability of atomic energy have been greatly exaggerated. In the first place, the only use for such energy that is at

<sup>3</sup> *One World or None*, pp. 39-41.



all in sight is as a source of heat—a new and cheaper fuel. It is not generally realized how small a fraction the cost of fuel is of the whole cost of preparing and marketing an industrial product. In the production and distribution of electric power, with coal-burning central stations, the cost of fuel accounts for only nine per cent of the total cost of a kilowatt hour delivered at the customer's meter. The percentage in more complicated manufacturing processes is less. Atomic power would certainly cost something; and it appears to be a very liberal estimate indeed that its utilization would increase the net purchasing power of the average citizen by ten per cent.

This is less than half the increase which has been at issue in the industrial disputes of the present year!

In millions of dollars, the sum involved is impressive, but in comparison with the material risk involved in the wholesale devastation of cities and the disruption of our present mechanized civilization it is insignificant even from the economic standpoint, leaving the loss of millions of lives to be evaluated on a higher level.

Even if the danger of violence could be entirely eliminated, the utilization of atomic energy presents difficult problems. The fission of a pound of uranium liberates nearly three million times as much energy as the burning of a pound of coal; but it also, by its very nature, liberates other things that are not so pleasant to have around. Penetrating radiation (neutrons and gamma-rays) is emitted in great amounts; and these radiations are deadly to any living thing they strike. Unless it is most carefully shielded by thick walls of metal or concrete, no one can approach a "pile" within which fission is going on, except at peril of his life. Even after the fission has ceased, radioactive products of many kinds remain which themselves emit dangerous radiation, and, in vicious hands, could be used with deadlier effect than any poison gas of the past. These dangerous by-products are inevitable concomitants of nuclear fission, so that the generation of "atomic power" cannot possibly be made foolproof. In the great piles which produced plutonium for the bombs, all by-products, including the heat, were nuisances to be got rid of as quickly as was consistent with safety. Elaborate precautions and continuous vigilance succeeded in protecting the lives and health of the personnel. Peacetime piles, designed primarily for the utilization of the liberated energy, appear to be practicable—though the details, if they have been worked out, have not yet been released. But

the same heavy shielding and protective precautions will be necessary in any case and harder to maintain in the absence of military discipline and secrecy. If no other dangers existed, a carefully designed and conservative licensing procedure, enforced by frequent and thorough inspections, would be essential from the standpoint of public health.

Fortunately, low-powered units are impracticable on account of the great weight of the shielding. This removes the hope that we may all have our private sources of atomic energy in our own homes—and also the much greater fear that ignorant or careless people might imperil their neighbors as well as their families and themselves.

If only large energy-generating units existed, they would be run by technically trained operators, alive to their own danger, and safety would be easier to secure. Much would depend upon the use to which the energy was put. Carelessness in an electric generating station would endanger its own staff, and perhaps some visitors, but would not do harm at the other end of the wires. Negligence in a plant which supplied steam or hot water for domestic heating might cause wholesale injury to its patrons from radioactivity.

Under proper precautions, the radioactive products (and others generated by neutrons absorbed by substances placed inside the shields) could be collected, separated, and made available for the advancement of knowledge, the treatment of disease, and perhaps for technical uses. A small number of piles of modest dimensions, which could be fully safeguarded from carelessness or malevolence should suffice to meet these important needs, without incurring the grave dangers of industrial operations.

Since this paragraph was written, an official "release" describes in detail scores of such products of the piles operated under the control of the United States, which are of immediate and intense interest to the physicist, the biologist and the physician. These will be generally available to trustworthy investigators, at approximately the cost of production, and under reasonable and remarkably simple safety regulations. In its main possibilities of gain to human knowledge and human welfare, the "atomic age" has thus already arrived.

The total amount of power which could be obtained from the exhaustion of the known deposits of uranium is relatively small—roughly equivalent to that which could be obtained from the amount of coal mined in a hundred years at the present world-wide rate. The amount

of the metal in low-grade ore—for which it has previously not been worth while even to prospect—is probably much greater. If it were thirty times as great, the total available energy in uranium would be about equal to that in coal. This is a guess; but it does not seem likely that the world's store of utilizable atomic energy greatly exceeds that contained in coal and oil. The whole amount of uranium in the earth's crust is very much greater, but most of it is very sparsely disseminated, and to count on this would be like calculating how much iron and aluminum are contained in the red clay of a field, and paying no attention at all to the difficulty and cost of getting them out.

Only one part in 140 of natural uranium consists of the "explosive" lighter isotope (U-235). If this alone could be utilized to provide energy, the whole known supply would produce only as much as the coal normally mined in a few months—and not very many times more than the coal left unmined on account of the recent strikes!

To make "atomic power" at all practicable, means must be devised for causing fission of the heavier uranium atoms as well. This is physically possible and probably technically practicable. Devices for doing so may have to be "enriched" with more easily fissionable atoms—thus increasing the danger of natural operation, and even more of intentional misuse.

There is one more aspect of the problem, of great ethical importance, which has been too little considered. The energy stored in the heavy atomic nuclei has been there since the remotest epoch, billions of years ago, back to which we dare to extrapolate our present knowledge.

We do not know how it got into the atoms; but we have every reason to believe that the process of getting it out is hopelessly irreversible. These nuclei form a precious and irreplaceable part of Nature's capital. We know already that their stores of energy at high potential can be used in ways that are otherwise beyond our power; but no one yet knows what unique possibilities for human welfare they may have when fully understood.

Meanwhile we talk blithely of ripping them out of the rocks and using them up for more fuel, and for purposes for which any other fuel would serve equally well.

If we exhaust these unique resources just to warm and light ourselves a little more cheaply for a generation or two, how will the men of centuries hence appraise us? Viewed in this perspective, atomic bombs seem actually respectable. At least, they are bigger and better bombs!

This widespread limitation of our sense of responsibility for human welfare to a future so short that it hardly extends beyond the limit of lives already in being is a grave ethical defect of our present liberal thinking.

But in this world, which is so very far from being foolproof, there is short shrift for fools. We are faced with the most devastating explosives and the deadliest poisons that have ever been known. The men who know most warn us earnestly that the avoidance of these dangers is incomparably more important than any material advantages that are at all in sight. Yet a very large part of the popular interest turns to hopes that our material well-being may increase—that we will be richer and more comfortable.<sup>4</sup>

One cannot but recall Isaiah's description of his own times:

"And in that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth; and behold, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die."<sup>5</sup>

But we may still see with our eyes, and hear with our ears, and understand with our hearts—and be healed.

<sup>4</sup>The last paragraphs are paraphrased from an address given by the writer in a course under the auspices of the Seventh Conference on Science, Philosophy, and Religion.

<sup>5</sup>Isaiah 22:12.

# The City of God

F. J. YETTER

*As the Confessions record St. Augustine's personal conversion, his City of God marks a turning point in human history—the conversion of the classical spirit to Christianity.*

THERE ARE some ancient books whose greatness is evidenced by the fact that even today, after the passage of ten, twenty, or thirty centuries, men go to them for enjoyment and for inspiration. There are others whose greatness lies not in the fact that they are read today, but in the fact that they have made today. They have directed the stream of history into the channels that have made today possible. Augustine's *City of God* is such a book. All the copies of his book might be irretrievably lost to Christian civilization but his name would still be one of the great names because he—one might almost say singlehanded—created Christian civilization. What should be of vital importance to us is that his philosophy of history lies at the root of the Anglo-Saxon civilization which we have inherited and in which lie the seeds of a better tomorrow.

It is commonly supposed and widely proclaimed—by many who ought to know better—that the Protestant Reformation began in Germany. That is not true. The Reformation did not begin in Germany, but in England. Luther did indeed take the first long step toward freeing the continent of Europe from the bondage of ecclesiasticism. But Luther was inspired to envisage that freedom and emboldened to achieve it by the writings of a man who had been burned at the stake in Bohemia a full century before—John Huss. And the ecclesiasticism that finally overwhelmed Huss had taken its first steps against him when it found him "tainted" with the "heresy" of an English professor and preacher, John Wycliff. Wycliff is interesting and important to us because he gave us the first English Bible. He should be more interesting and more important to us because in a broad sense he initiated the transformation of society that came with the Protestant Reformation and the creation of the modern world of freedom. Wycliff is interesting and important to us for the purpose of this paper because his great work was the direct outcome of the profound influence upon him of the writings of Augustine.

It is true that Luther's genius lay in large part in the rediscovery of Augustine. The Augustine whom Luther discovered, however, was a one-sided Augustine, as one-sided in many ways as the Augustine of the medieval church had been. The medieval church had been fashioned by a church-weighted interpretation of the *City of God*, which the church leaders, notably Gregory the Great, exploited for their own ends. Luther, on the other hand, discovered only the Augustine of the *Confessions*. He could not understand that the *Confessions* and the *City of God* were but different expressions of the same basic principle. As a consequence of that misunderstanding, he gave the world not only religious freedom, but religious as well as secular license, and in the end totalitarian government. More or less identifying Augustine with pure mysticism, Luther opened the way for the multitude of modern cults at the same time that, with his tendency to extreme subjectivism and individualism, he left the door open to the rise of the modern Macchiavellian state. If Luther, in the field of Bible interpretation and of personal religion, brought the world back from preoccupation with the letter to inspiration by the spirit, on the broader stage of world history he fastened upon the church and upon the nations a more deadening legalism than that of the Middle Ages. He perpetuated the mistake of medievalism in identifying the *civitas Dei* with the visible church and the even more nearly fatal mistake of identifying the *civitas terrena* with the visible state.

Wycliff could make no such error. He was part of a tradition that repudiated legalism as a principle. He was the culmination of a stream of human culture that had bypassed medievalism in its most superstitious and most legalistic forms. The society of which Wycliff was the inheritor had written Augustine's philosophy of history into its customs and its laws. It is a significant fact that too often escapes our notice that the history of the English church is a long one. The second Augustine became Archbishop of Canterbury in 607 under the protection of the Kentish king Aethelberht just when the first Augustine's great book, the *City of God*, was beginning to make its influence felt in the shaping of history. (As a matter of fact Christianity had existed in England before Augustine but had been driven into Wales and Cornwall by the Anglo-Saxon invasion.) At the enthronement of that first Archbishop of Canterbury two societies, one secular, the other religious, began the struggle against each other—not the struggle for mutual annihilation that characterized the Continent, the *Kulturkampf* as Bismarck called it, but the struggle of



each to give to the other the qualities it needed for its best life. These two societies are not, as Aquinas taught, and as Luther along with the medieval church believed, two perfect societies each independent of the other and each complete in itself. Rather they are two imperfect—that is, incomplete—societies each needing the other for the achieving of its own highest destiny.

By one of the accidents of history or, as Augustine would have said, in the providence of God, the relation of the papacy with the British nation had from the beginning something like the relation of the two cities in the Augustinian sense, the *civitas Dei* and the *civitas terrena*. Gregory, who sent the second Augustine to England, was the first bishop of Rome who arrogated to himself the full powers of the papacy. He had no real jurisdiction over the English church and gave over the superintendency of the church to Augustine as Archbishop of Canterbury; yet the English church looked to Rome as the source of its life, the messenger from whom it had received the divine summons. England's insularity and the early founding of the English church, simultaneous with the founding of the papacy itself, prevented the domination of the papacy from weakening the power of the throne; yet its very distance from Rome—the distance which always lends enchantment—and its reverence for Rome as the founder of its church enabled Englishmen to see, as no Christian on the continent could see, Rome as a symbol of the divine city let down by God from heaven for the salvation of men—the city of God.

We began by saying that there is a direct relation between Augustine's *Confessions* and his *City of God*. This is not to say that the city, the *civitas*, the society is a person in the sense that Augustine was a person or that we are persons. It is merely to say that it is the personal relationships and the personal relationships alone, that can serve as the basis of any valid interpretation of events or ideas or institutions or movements or any subject that comes within the purview of the human mind. Though a city, a church, a government, a society is not a person, it is an amalgam of personal relationships. Science, industry, commerce, education, government do not exist in the abstract. They exist only as expressions of human activity. They have a meaning and a validity only to the extent to which they represent the attempt of man to understand his world and to shape it toward ends that have meaning and validity for him.

The story of Augustine's life is a story of "evangelical humanism." One ought perhaps to say that it is *the* story of evangelical humanism, for it is the story of humanism become evangelical. It is the story of the spirit of man in quest of truth and life, of his failure to find that truth and life, of his disillusionment and despair, and finally of the touch of the Spirit of God upon him bringing him a greater truth and a greater life than he had ever dreamed of.

By all the circumstances of his career, Augustine was a humanist of the humanists as Paul was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. His father, a pagan in early life, lived by a humanism which could not by any standards be given the epithet "critical." He lived for his own body. His unfaithfulness to Monnica and his delight in his son's developing sexual life were evidences of an unfortunate inheritance whose handicaps Augustine was to carry with him throughout life. Monnica herself, though a devout Christian and devoted to her son, was a doting mother who dreamed of material success for her boy, a dream that sometimes prevented her from understanding her son's deepest spiritual needs.

The humanism of Augustine lingered all too often on the plane of sense. During his stay at the University of Carthage he joined in all the dissipations of the fast set. During that time and for long afterward—fourteen years in all—he kept a concubine, who bore him a son. In spite, however, of these irregularities—which may perhaps be condoned in a measure if we remember that the society of Augustine's day, even the Christian society, did not consider them too irregular—Augustine was cast in a finer mold and could not continue to wallow in the mire of sensual indulgence. Moreover, the advantages of his education brought him in contact with the best minds of antiquity. At twenty he records that a book of Aristotle's fell into his hands which was called *The Ten Predicaments* and "on whose very name," he says, "I hung, as on something great and divine."<sup>1</sup>

We cannot follow the changing fortunes of Augustine's life. They are familiar to us all. Suffice it for our purpose to say here that the great experience of his life, his conversion, did more than change his life. It changed his interpretation of his life. He had thought that he was following his own inclinations, and achieving his own victories. He had thought that he was seeking not only the truth of human life but the way to God. Now he understood that God *was seeking him*. Every

<sup>1</sup> *The Confessions of St. Augustine*, tr. E. B. Pusey, Harvard Classics Vol. VII, p. 62.

slightest incident of his life began to have meaning and purpose. From the moment he appeared in the world God was casting the protecting mantle of his providence over him. At every step of the way God's voice kept calling to him though he knew it not, until at last it called with irresistible force: "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, in concupiscence."<sup>2</sup>

The writing of the *City of God* is just such a turning point in the life of the human race. It marks the conversion of humanism to Christianity. That conversion was not merely a change of life. It was a change in man's interpretation of life. Many of the great minds of Greece and Rome had looked upon the human scene and had sought the solution of problems that presented themselves to men as individuals or as members of society. Especially they sought standards upon which men could rely for the ruling of their own lives and for the training of their children. In the words of Stevenson, in his characterization of literature, they sought "to rise from the consideration of living to the definition of life." And now one of the greatest of the humanists, one who is not only great in his own right, by virtue of the magnificence of his own mind, but great also by virtue of his intellectual heritage, by virtue of the fact that, so to speak, he is standing on the shoulders of Cicero and Vergil, of Socrates and Plato and Aristotle—this great humanist finds that human life has a height and a depth and a richness of which men had never dreamed. He understands now that all through the seemingly meaningless centuries that are past, God has been seeking out man, God has been calling man to a high and holy destiny—a destiny that cannot be understood in terms of human life alone, but only as one receives a divine gift of grace coming to man out of another world, the eternal world of God. Man can understand his own life and his own human society at its highest and noblest only as he becomes conscious that he belongs also to a higher and more noble and more glorious society, a *civitas coelestis*, a *civitas Dei*, a city of God.

As in the case of his personal life, it is a verse of Scripture that brings to Augustine the revelation of life's deepest meaning. He enumerates several of the Scripture references to the City of God.<sup>3</sup> The verse that seems to have opened to him his great vision is the third verse

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 142, quoting Romans 13:13-14.

<sup>3</sup> *The City of God*, tr. Marcus Dods, et al., 2 vols., in *The Works of Aurelius Augustine*, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1871. 1:432, 436.

of the 87th Psalm, "Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God."<sup>4</sup> This is a poet's vision and is not to be interpreted with prosaic literalness. It is the vision of a new city, a new state, a new society, a new family, a new house, a new temple—all are synonymous in the mind of Augustine.<sup>5</sup> It is that society which was prefigured in Solomon's temple. The builder of this new society is not David or Solomon, but Christ "who should build a house of God, not of wood and stone, but of men."<sup>6</sup> "Christ, who teaches life-giving truth"<sup>7</sup> and abominates and condemns the wicked and hurtful lusts of men "gradually withdraws his own people from a world that is corrupted by these vices, and is falling into ruins, to make of them an eternal city, whose glory rests not on the acclamations of vanity, but on the judgment of truth."<sup>8</sup>

Dickens would have called Augustine's book, as he called his own, *A Tale of Two Cities*. It is in truth a tale not of one city but of two, not of one society but of two. There is the city of God, the *civitas coelestis*, but there is also the city of earth, the *civitas terrena*. They are not two municipalities, nor two states, nor a visible state and a visible church. They are "two kinds of human society. . . . The one consists of those who wish to live after the flesh, the other of those who wish to live after the spirit; and when they severally achieve what they wish, they live in peace, each after their kind."<sup>9</sup>

Nor is this cleavage of the two cities only a division between sacred and secular history. Both cities are found in the record of the Scriptures; both are found likewise in the life of the nations. Cain was the progenitor of the city of earth, just as Seth (after Abel's death) was the progenitor of the city of God.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, "there have been certain men even of other nations who belonged, not by earthly but heavenly fellowship, to the true Israelites, the citizens of the country that is above."<sup>11</sup>

Broadly speaking, however, the two cities have been represented by two groups of people—the heavenly city by the chosen people of God, the Hebrews, the earthly city by the empires of Assyria and Rome. "In Assyria . . . the dominion of the impious city had the pre-eminence.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:77.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:84.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:191.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:71.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:71.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:2.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:81.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:79.

Its head was Babylon—an earth-born city, most fitly named, for it means confusion.”<sup>12</sup> Rome, a second Babylon, was born just as the first Babylon was sinking into oblivion. Rome herself has since fallen. The memory of her so recent fall moves the heart of Augustine, and he cannot bring himself to put her under the same condemnation with Assyria. She has carried on brutal and bloody wars, but she has aided the progress of the heavenly city by bringing about among her subject peoples a unity of language.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, by her “God was pleased to conquer the whole world, and subdue it far and wide by bringing it into one fellowship of government and laws.”<sup>14</sup>

This seeming indecision with regard to the goodness or wickedness of the human city characterizes almost the whole of Augustine’s twenty-two books on the “City of God.” The explanation lies in the constant reiteration in Augustine’s mind of what seems to him a central yet two-fold Christian truth: on the one hand, the essential goodness of man’s nature as he came from the hand of God, on the other the utter perversion of man’s will. “The enemies of God are so, not by nature, but by will . . . not through their power to hurt, but by their will to oppose him.”<sup>15</sup>

There is another and a simpler reason that may account in part for this seeming vacillation between man as wicked and man as good. The *City of God* was thirteen years in the writing, and it shows us as a result an Augustine of many moods. There are moods of darkness and despair when all human life, save as it is touched directly by the Spirit of God, is seen to be shot through with the lust and vileness of pagan Rome, where men even like the great “Cicero as aedile propitiated Flora with lewd games”;<sup>16</sup> where in honor of the virgin Coelestis and Berecynthia, the mother of all the gods, Augustine himself as a young man had heard sung before her couch “productions so obscene and filthy for the ear—I do not say of the mother of the gods, but of the mother of any senator or honest man—nay, so impure, that not even the mother of the foulmouthed players themselves could have formed one of the audience.”<sup>17</sup> In such moods Augustine can only call upon his fellow

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:131.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:311.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:241.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:484.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:87.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:52.

Christians to flee with him "out of the city of this world, which is altogether a society of ungodly angels and men."<sup>18</sup> At its best it is a society which is "for the most part divided against itself, and the strongest oppress the others, because all follow after their own interests and lusts."<sup>19</sup>

But happily there are other and calmer moods when the human city is seen to have some admirable qualities in its own right. The spirits of the great humanists of the past ages, especially of Plato, whom Augustine knew chiefly through Plotinus and Porphyry, speak soothing words of wisdom into his troubled soul. Man now is not vicious and wicked in this earthly city; he is only insensible of the greater joy that he might know if only he might catch a vision of the celestial city, the life eternal, where none but the worthy shall be and where there shall be true peace,<sup>20</sup> where in the words of the writer of the Apocalypse "there is no more sea," that is, "no more of the surgings and restlessness of human life."<sup>21</sup> The citizens of the human city are not necessarily wicked. They are only "miserable because they have forsaken Him who supremely is, and turned to themselves who have no such essence."<sup>22</sup> Augustine now speaks with rapturous admiration of those founders of great Rome whose weakness is the human weakness of being separated by the prison wall of sense from the great divine eternal world of ideas. Vergil's words describing them, Augustine says, express beautifully the mind of Plato:

A fiery strength inspires their lives,  
An essence that from heaven derives,  
Though clogged in part by limbs of clay,  
And the dull "vesture of decay."<sup>23</sup>

Augustine can only mourn that the sun of that great empire has at last set. It was a human empire, and yet it was in a sense above the human because it was a part of God's eternal plan for men. Almost mournfully he quotes Vergil:

Gone from each fane, each sacred shrine  
Are those who made thy realm divine.<sup>24</sup>

In such moods the great humanist cannot condemn man for the vices of

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:235.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:218.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:541.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:376.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:487.

<sup>23</sup> *Aeneid*, 6:730-32; *City of God*, 2:5.

<sup>24</sup> *Aeneid*, 2:351; *City of God*, 1:78.



paganism. He can only reassert that the rites of paganism which put so low a value upon human life and conduct cannot be in any true sense worship of the eternal and righteous God. "The majesty of God cannot be propitiated by that which defiles the dignity of man."<sup>25</sup>

We have said nothing about Augustine's account of the origin of the two cities in the fall of the angels; of his discussion of the fallen angels, whom he identifies with the false gods of paganism; of the changeless will of God, who can create new things—"new to the world, but not to Him";<sup>26</sup> of the warfare of good with evil in man's own soul; of the nexus between predestination and free will; of the idea of development and progress of mankind, from childhood through youth to age; of the wonders of material progress. ("What wonderful—one might say stupefying—advances has human industry made . . . ?")<sup>27</sup> All these and many more observations and reflexions reveal not only the great Christian doctor but the ardent humanist and student of man whose book Poujalat says is "*comme l'encyclopédie du cinquième siècle*."<sup>28</sup>

We ought to say a word here about some practical implications of the book. It is true that Augustine does at times identify the city of God with the church; but he is always careful to make the Protestant distinction—Catholicism makes the distinction in principle but always repudiates it in practice—between the visible church and the invisible church, between "the Church as it now is" and "the Church as it is destined to be when no wicked person shall be in her."<sup>29</sup> It is because Catholicism has made that identification of the city of God with the church, yet failed to make clear in its practice the distinction between the visible and the invisible church, that its attitude in matters of church and state has been fraught with such grave dangers to man's freedom.

A vast deal of nonsense has been said and written by superpatriots about the separation of church and state. It is a curious and paradoxical truth that when men have taken a most determined stand for the separation of church and state, the result has been the dominance of one or the other. Thomas Aquinas made the church and the state two complete and independent societies, yet that theory did not prevent the idea of the domination of the papacy from flourishing and continuing until now.

<sup>25</sup> *City of God*, 1:90.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:512.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:525.

<sup>28</sup> Preface by Marcus Dods, Vol. 1, p. xiii.

<sup>29</sup> *City of God*, 2:365.

In Germany where the principle was entertained under Protestant auspices the end has been secular totalitarianism. In America where Deism, transplanted from Catholic France, established entire separation, the fatal seed is just beginning to bear fruit in a state sponsoring, and compelled by its own infallible decrees to enforce, godless education. It has not borne fruit before because, as Americans are not yet able to see, the American nation has been protected spiritually for a century and a half by the fortress of Protestantism, as it has been protected physically by the Atlantic Ocean and the British fleet.

The point that I am trying to make for the purpose of this paper is that this mistaken conception is not, as many suppose, Augustinian. There should be separation of church and state; in that all are agreed. What we are not justified in maintaining as the teaching of Augustine is the commonly accepted and commonly preached idea that church and state shall not touch each other at any point. Baldly stated, this idea means that the church shall be entirely unsecular (that is, otherworldly), and that the state shall be entirely irreligious.

Augustine predicates the separation of the two societies, but again and again he says also that they cannot be separated. In a sense they have "diverse faith, diverse hope, and diverse love";<sup>30</sup> but in another sense these two cities "are in this world commingled and implicated with one another,"<sup>31</sup> and again, "in this present world commingled, and as it were, entangled together."<sup>32</sup> And again, "In truth, these two cities are entangled together in this world, and intermixed until the last judgment effect their separation."<sup>33</sup> And again, more strongly, "Even the heavenly city . . . while in its state of pilgrimage, avails itself of the peace of earth, and so far as it can without injuring faith and godliness, desires and maintains a common agreement among men regarding the acquisition of the necessities of life, and makes this earthly peace bear upon the peace of heaven."<sup>34</sup>

What help then do we receive from Augustine on the subject of church and state? We shall receive a great deal of help, I fancy, if we begin by not expecting to receive too much. We do not go to Vergil to learn about Roman government, or to Homer to learn how an army

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:392.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:435.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:437.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:46.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 2:328.

ought to be organized. We can understand the *City of God* best if we approach it, as we approach the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*, with the imagination of the poet. The book is not so much a discourse on politics or even on theology as it is the vision of a seer and a prophet. Papini calls it "the most prodigious of prose epics."<sup>35</sup> It is the vision of mankind on the march, and conscious for the first time that he is on the march, that he is moving toward some great and divine destiny which is yet hidden in the mind of the Almighty.

This viewpoint, poetic though it be—more accurately we should say prophetic in the Old Testament sense—has yet a direct bearing, I believe, upon the practical art of government in church and state.

If we disregard Paul's idea of the glorified body—which Augustine accepts but which he cannot quite work into his own system of thought—we may say that the *civitas Dei* bears the same relation to the *civitas terrena* as the soul bears to the body. All of us, in spite of modern psychology, still believe there is such an entity as the soul. Further we believe that the soul is all-important and must somehow dominate the physical body. But would anyone presume to say that the soul or the body could exist alone in this physical life? Or who would presume to legislate by fixed and unchangeable and infallible laws what the boundaries are between the region of the soul's life and that of the body? No more can we with the two cities. Above in its seat of blessedness, united to all the angels, it will be a complete society. Here below it is a pilgrim city, imperfect, incomplete, requiring the aid of the earthly city even for the fulfilment of its heavenly task, just as the visions of the soul can find practical expression only through the medium of the body. Such boundaries as are sensibly fixed can be fixed, not by ironclad laws or infallible Bills of Rights, but by experience, years of experience, yes, centuries of experience in the adjustment of mutual personal relationships. They can be fixed in such a way as to preserve freedom *and* authority only by people who believe in tradition, who believe that if a society is to have a future it must also have a past. The dead as well as the living must have a voice in the shaping of the world that is to be.

So we return to the thesis with which this paper began: namely, that the "City of God" is humanism made evangelical. It marks the conversion of humanism to Christianity. Its purpose was not to es-

<sup>35</sup> Giovanni Papini, *Saint Augustine*, tr. M. P. Agnetti, Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1st ed., 1930, p. 269.

tablish lines of demarcation between church and state. Its purpose was to assure men that though organized society as they knew it might fall to pieces or be swept away, there is yet another society which no cataclysm of nature or scourge of man can crush or sweep away. That society is formed according as men turn away from the lust and pride that would debase the natural dignity with which a God of love has endowed them and turn their faces toward that eternal world out of which they have come and out of which God sent his Mediator to reconcile all men to himself. That society is formed according as men see history not as a meaningless jumble of events but as a steady progress toward a divine goal, as a progress whereby the human race "might gradually rise from earthly to heavenly things, and from the visible to the invisible,"<sup>30</sup> from the *civitas terrena* to the *civitas coelestis*, the *civitas Dei*, the City of God.

<sup>30</sup> *City of God*, 1:402.

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## From "The Desire of Nations"\*

EDWIN MARKHAM

He comes to make the long injustice right—  
Comes to push back the shadow of the night,  
The gray Tradition full of flint and flaw—  
Comes to wipe out the insults to the soul,  
The insults of the Few against the Whole,  
The insults they make righteous with a law.

Yea, he will bear the Safety of the State,  
For in his still and rhythmic steps will be  
The power and music of Alcione,  
Who holds the swift heavens in their starry fate.  
Yea, he will lay on souls the power of peace,  
And send on kingdoms torn the sense of home—  
More than the fire of Joy that burned on Greece,  
More than the light of Law that rose on Rome.

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\* From *The Man With the Hoe and Other Poems*, Doubleday & McClure, 1899. Used by permission.

# The Life, Work, and Gospel of Walter Rauschenbusch\*

WILLIAM A. MUELLER

*A sympathetic study of the prophet of the "social gospel." This article corrects certain misapprehensions and includes biographical material hitherto unpublished.*

LONG BEFORE I ever heard of Walter Rauschenbusch and his works, I was acquainted with his basic philosophy of life. While still living in Europe I had studied eagerly Kutter and Ragatz, Swiss Christian Socialists; through discussions in the Christian Youth movement of Germany and the study of Karl Marx I had been prepared for many of the insights that Rauschenbusch later imparted to me. I would also acknowledge my debt to a German Baptist pastor, Robert H. Hauser of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, who after my coming to America first introduced me to the prophet of Rochester. Though we clashed seriously regarding the Apostle Paul, Hauser engendered in me a deep interest and love for Walter Rauschenbusch.

## I

In the fall of 1929 Winifred, the gifted daughter of Walter Rauschenbusch, wrote a letter of human interest to one of her father's lifelong friends, the late Professor F. W. C. Meyer of Rochester Theological Seminary. She had been asked by an American sociologist to provide him with some data concerning her father's career. She wrote:

Like most children, I know something of my father's personal life and much about his charm. But his public life and his intellectual development are not so clear. In fact, until 1910 or 1916 I have no great feeling for what was going on politically or what the intellectual currents were. If I were ever teaching sociology, I should like to have my students study the period in which their grandparents lived and then sneak up to the decades in which their parents were young and active. I have a theory that it is the few decades prior to and just after one's birth that one is most ignorant of intellectually although most influenced by unconsciously.<sup>1</sup>

Rauschenbusch was born in 1861. He died in 1918. What was the world like into which he was born? It was the age of Bismarck, Cavour,

\*This paper was read before the students of the mid-Atlantic Interseminary Conference, which met on the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School campus in November, 1945.

<sup>1</sup> In the writer's collection.

and Lincoln in politics; of F. C. Baur, Tobias Beck, and David Friedrich Strauss in theology; of Liebig, Maxwell, Gauss, and Darwin in science. It was an age of revolutionary upheavals in commerce and industry. There was imperialism on a grand scale, manifest destiny of the Victorians who feigned a concern for the uncivilized tribes at the antipodes. The period just prior to Rauschenbusch's birth was marked in America by the work of men like Theodore Parker and Horace Bushnell who disturbed America's social and theological poise in the forties and fifties of the last century. This, too, was the period of the fierce anti-slavery agitation that finally led to the Civil War. It was an era characterized on the one hand by the most exuberant optimism, by a buoyant belief in progress, by the carving out of individual and national empires, by an almost daemonic ruthlessness in all realms of life, yet on the other hand discerning minds like Dostoevsky could discover in it signs of decline and the coming revolution of nihilism.

This was the world into which Walter Rauschenbusch was born in 1861.

## II

Our next concern is with Rauschenbusch's immediate antecedents. The prophet of the Social Gospel hails from seven generations of eminent Lutheran preachers and pastors. His father, August Rauschenbusch, migrated to the United States in 1845, giving up a large and prosperous Lutheran parish in Altena, Westphalia, in order to become a pioneer Evangelical missionary on America's frontier around St. Louis, Missouri. He was a learned man, having received a most excellent classical training both in his own home, the Gymnasium at Elberfeld in the Rhineland, and at the Universities of Berlin and Bonn. Walter's father, after a period of intense inner struggle, had come through to a vital Christian experience which held him steady in a life of great toil and much physical affliction. He became a Baptist in 1850, again after a struggle of more than two years of deep searching of the Scriptures and of his own heart.

The question is to the point whether or not Walter's home had in it elements that might have engendered the social passion that later came to dominate his life. Dores R. Sharpe, the recent biographer of Rauschenbusch, flatly denies any such possibility. He writes: "The family engaged daily in the worship of God. It was a religious home without any social insight or outlook."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Walter Rauschenbusch, a Biography* (The Macmillan Company, 1942), p. 43.



However, if one reads the record that Walter has left of his father's life and career, one begins to doubt the accuracy of Dr. Sharpe's sweeping statement. Young August Rauschenbusch in his university days had a strong yearning for freedom. When in the thirties of the last century German princes backed reactionary policies contrary to the high hopes that had been held up to the German people during the War of Liberation against Napoleon, August Rauschenbusch one day said to his father, "If all other means for the deliverance of Germany should fail, then there are still daggers which could be drawn against the princes." When he came to America in 1845, August Rauschenbusch at once took an interest in the welfare of German immigrants. On his first return to Germany he visited the *Auswandererheime* or Emigrants' Homes at Bremerhaven, counseled with the thousands of immigrants from Poland, Russia, Austria, and Germany, insisted that the steamship agencies provide libraries on their ships for both sailors and passengers, and strongly urged that the American Tract Society—in whose interest he had labored both as a pioneer missionary on the frontier and as editor of its German publications—engage bilingual colporters to act as counselors to these immigrants. Then, as he made his way back to America in 1854, the elder Rauschenbusch supervised the emigration of over one hundred people from his native Altena in Germany to the fertile region of the Mississippi valley. Again, in the Constitution of the Baptist Church which he established in the state of Missouri, he inserted a proviso against slaveholders, excluding them from membership. Nor is his refusal to accept salaries twice as large as the pitiful remuneration he received to be overlooked. These traits and activities may well be interpreted as showing a deep sense of religious and social responsibility, and they must have had some influence on Walter Rauschenbusch. It is at least questionable to assert that the home into which he was born was devoid of any social insight or outlook.

### III

The life of Walter Rauschenbusch may be roughly divided into four distinct yet naturally interrelated parts. Significantly, as Dr. Sharpe has pointed out, this rich life covers a significant epoch in American life; that is, from the Civil War to the end of World War I. These four divisions are the following:

First, the years from 1861 to 1886, the formative years, lived partly in Germany and partly in the United States.

Secondly, the years from 1886 to 1897, when he was pastor of the Second German Baptist Church in New York City, the period in which his Christian social philosophy took form within the context of what might be called progressive evangelicalism.

Thirdly, the years from 1897 to 1902, during which time he was Professor of New Testament and related subjects in the German Department of the Rochester Theological Seminary.

Lastly, the years from 1902 to 1918, when he was Professor of Church History in what is now known as the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. He now reached the peak of his influence as the herald of the Social Gospel and as a much-coveted lecturer on college and university and other public platforms. In this period the year 1907 stands out as a banner year for it marked the publication of his first great book, entitled *Christianity and the Social Crisis*. This epoch-making book was followed by a number of others, namely *For God and the People: Prayers of the Social Awakening*, 1910; *Christianizing the Social Order*, 1912; *Unto Me*, 1912; *Dare We Be Christian?* 1914; *The Social Principles of Jesus*, 1916, and *A Theology for the Social Gospel*, 1917.<sup>8</sup>

#### IV

A careful perusal of Rauschenbusch's major works yields rich fruit. His interests ran the whole gamut of modern life and also encompassed large areas of the world's and the church's history. He had a poetic vein, a vivid imagination, and a fine sense of humor. His whimsical autobiographical notes, written in 1900 for the exclusive use and enjoyment of his young wife, are especially a revelation of Rauschenbusch's character. Here he reports that one day, when he was still a little child, his father read Psalm 14 during the evening devotions. The sentence, "*Die Toren sprechen in ihrem Herzen, es ist kein Gott*" (Fools say in their hearts: there is no God), somehow struck fire in young Walter's soul. As he played with his blocks constructing a cross, his mother overheard him saying to himself: "*Ist doch ein Dott*" (But there is a Dod). At another time he was asked, "What do you want to be some day?" He replied, "John the Baptist"—which, as he later remarked, was especially "gratifying to all good Baptists."

This poem, written by Walter in 1882, contains his modest self-characterization:

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 157-158.

I knew a boy and brown were his eyes,  
And they danced as merry as summer flies,  
A dimple he wore on his freckled cheek,  
And his hair stood straight and sandy and thick,  
Hung o'er his forehead arched and broad  
And rough like a boulder covered with sod.  
He did no good and no one knew why  
Such a being as he was under the sky,  
Save that on him was shown the proof,  
That there is such a thing as unselfish love.

It was at this time that Walter found himself again in the land of his forebears, studying at the Gymnasium at Gütersloh in Westphalia from 1879 to 1883. While there he corresponded with a fellow alumnus from the Rochester Free Academy, Edward J. Hanna, who was then training in Rome for the Catholic priesthood, and who later was to become Archbishop of San Francisco. These letters reveal the sharp and inquiring mind of young Walter, who with much tact and also a little guile pries into the baffling tenets of Catholic faith and practice. It is significant to observe that these school-day pals remained the stoutest of friends as they grew older, the one to become America's most influential Protestant social prophet, the other to attain to dizzy heights in the Catholic hierarchy. Who said that unless two agree they cannot walk together? Is it not true, as someone has said, that the church lives and grows in part through the "creativity of its internal disagreements"?

That a man like Rauschenbusch was burdened with work is easily understood. In 1911 he wrote to a friend from his vacation haunt: "I have no secretary; yet I received forty-eight letters only yesterday, o weh!" His sense of humor broke through ever and anon. When he and his colleagues in the German Department of the Seminary were laboring hard to secure an endowment of \$100,000.00, he wrote to a dear friend: "Do you know that we got \$1,000.00 out of the Boston visit after all? Mr. K. sent a subscription for that amount, but he will pay it only after \$99,000.00 are paid, and if he dies before that time, he pays nothing. *He is old. Pray for his health!*"

Writing to a friend whom he had recommended to a good church in the Middle West, he had this to say concerning its membership: "The First Church contains a good number of trustworthy members, though it is said to have some crooked sticks, but with sensible guidance I think they will never know how crooked they are."

Acknowledging the kindness of a friend who had sent on some

socks he had left behind, he wrote: "My heartiest thanks for sending the socks. You see I try to leave blessings behind, but apparently they were too big for you and to use them as sleeping bags for the kids would be too much of a novelty."

We may conclude this section with one more glimpse of the generous soul of Walter Rauschenbusch, which when I first read it moved me most deeply:

Years ago—

Now why do I remember this?—

I was hiking with my children

On an elegant State road,

And it was hot.

On the downward dip of a hill

We overtook a little Jew,

Crooked, underfed,

A homely sliver of a man.

He was toting a tiny, foreign-looking hand-organ,

And his face was mottled with heat.

Poor little chap!

Hot miles behind and before him,

With lonely farms or wealthy country homes,

Averaging two and a half child per mile.

No nice, dirty Russian villages,

Waving their church spires to him

With promise of oodles of tow-headed children,

Who would dance to his music

And bring him kopeks.

He was a misfit apostle of art,

In a strange and barren land.

Crossing a creek,

We came to the golf-links,

And sat down by the old stone wall

To wait for the little man.

Giving him fair greeting,

We begged for music.

Eagerly he unslung his organ.

Tenderly he cranked its wheezy insides,

Nodding like a connoisseur,

Smiling in sympathy for the bliss

Which he knew he was producing in us.

He felt the beautiful mission of art

To sweeten and uplift the soul.

Was he not setting free for us

The glorious fancies of great masters,

Even though slightly damaged?

Was it the wind that stirred the dust?  
Nay, it was the feet of the Nine Muses  
Weaving their dance,  
And the little Jew was a priest of Apollo.

We applauded, and called for more.  
His eyes shone.  
He gave us all he had.  
Then came three golfers across the road,  
Glancing sideways, and wondering;<sup>4</sup>  
For they were stout and very respectable  
And knew me to be highly respectable  
And accustomed to hold up my end;  
And here I sat in the dusty grass  
Beating time to an aged music box,  
And nodding in sober intoxication to the little Jew.

So we paid the artist his obolus,  
And parted, bowing almost as courteously as he.

But my little daughter said to me, gravely,  
"Now I understand you better, father."  
So my bit of virtue had reward,  
Spot cash, a hundred fold,  
In the life that now is,  
According to the promises.

But wouldn't it be fine  
If my little musician,  
Grown radiant and strong,  
Should come on me,  
Sitting by the asphodel golf-links of heaven,  
And should play to me the music  
Which we both faintly heard  
In the dust and heat of the earth?<sup>5</sup>

## V

Our last concern is with Rauschenbusch's social philosophy. It was during his New York pastorate, as he ministered to God's people in the Second German Baptist Church, between 1886 and 1897, that he was awakened to the perils and needs of a social order that violated practically every law, human or divine. Here, in his work in parish and community, Rauschenbusch sensed the sharp incongruities of a social order that tended to depersonalize humans destined for a life of beauty and holiness. Here, too, he received a vision of the Kingdom of God

<sup>4</sup>One of them was Dr. Rush Rhees, the President of the University of Rochester.

<sup>5</sup>In the Collection of the writer.

as an all-embracing, all-compelling, redemptive message and redeeming fact for people and nations lost and caught in the web of personal and collective sin. He wrote later in his first epoch-making book to which reference has already been made:

All the teaching of Jesus and all his thinking centered about the hope of the Kingdom of God. His moral teachings get their meaning only when viewed from that center. He was not a Greek philosopher or Hindu pundit teaching the individual the way of emancipation from the world and its passions, but a Hebrew prophet preparing men for the righteous social order.<sup>6</sup>

This revolutionizing insight was hammered out on the anvil of his soul while Rauschenbusch labored in the heart of a great metropolis, fighting corruption in high places, pleading for the rights of workers to organize for common goals, and attacking those who tried to compound pious religion with selfish personal ambitions.

As he read the Bible, particularly the Old Testament prophets and the Synoptic Gospels, as he pondered on the power and love of the primitive Christian community, as he traced the history of the Kingdom of God through Augustine, the Franciscan movement, the Lollards, and the Anabaptists, as he relived in his own soul the mighty social, political, and religious upheavals that followed in the wake of the Reformation, as he discovered the zeal of the Puritans for a Christian social order or noted the victorious march of modern missions, Walter Rauschenbusch felt the throb and the thrill of the ongoing of the Kingdom of God through history. From now on he saw the ministry of the church extended to ever-widening areas of life. He wrote in 1912:

In the Alps I have seen the summit of some great mountain come out of the clouds in the early morn and stand revealed in blazing purity. Its foot was still swathed in drifting mist, but I knew the mountain was there and my soul rejoiced in it. So Christ's conception of the Kingdom of God came to me as a new revelation. Here was the idea and purpose that had dominated the mind of the Master himself. All his teachings center about it. His life was given to it. His death was suffered for it. When a man has once seen that in the Gospels, he can never unsee it again. . . . I found that this new conception of the purpose of Christianity was strangely satisfying. It responded to all the old and all the new elements of my religious life. The saving of the lost, the teaching of the young, the pastoral care of the poor and frail, the quickening of starved intellects, the study of the Bible, church union, political reform, the reorganization of the industrial system, international peace—it was all covered by the one aim of the Reign of God on earth. That idea is necessarily as big as humanity, for it means the divine transformation of all human life.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (The Macmillan Company, 1907), p. 67.

<sup>7</sup> *Christianising the Social Order* (The Macmillan Company, 1912), pp. 93-94.



Those who have espoused the basic tenets of Walter Rauschenbusch's faith have in recent years been severely taken to task for holding to a utopian optimism. They have been charged with a grave misunderstanding of the gravity of man's involvement in sin and self-will. Others, in turn, have accused Rauschenbusch and his disciples of having an interest in social redemption only, to the neglect of the redemption of the individual. A few passages from Rauschenbusch's writings, chosen almost at random, may help to clarify his position. In 1916 Rauschenbusch wrote:

The advance of the Kingdom of God is not simply a process of social education but a conflict with hostile forces which resist, neutralize, and defy whatever works toward the true social order. The strategy of the Kingdom of God, therefore, involves a study of the social problem of evil.<sup>8</sup>

In the same connection he warned youthful idealists in these words: "Evil is more durable and versatile than youth and optimism imagine. The belief in a satanic power of evil expresses the conviction of the permanent power of evil."<sup>9</sup>

With approval, he quoted the saying of President Hyde: "The hereditary tiger is in us all, also the hereditary oyster and clam. Indifference is the largest factor, though not the ugliest form, in the production of evil."<sup>10</sup> Rauschenbusch knew something of the drag of selfishness and sin when he pointed out that "the idea that men ardently desire what is rational and noble is pernicious fiction. They want to be let alone. This is part of original sin."<sup>11</sup>

Or consider what Rauschenbusch said on a memorable occasion, namely the ordination to the gospel ministry of Justin Wroe Nixon, when he interpreted the life of the preacher in terms of the parable of the Sower. Said he:

It is an absolute certainty that much of his work will be spoiled for him. With all the earnestness of his soul he sends a thought out to the people; he moves a young soul, but a frivolous friend on the way home undoes it all. He seeks to brace a young man to keep his sensual appetites under control, but a great commercial corporation subsidizes saloons all along our streets to decoy the young fellow and turn his soul into dividends for the brewing and distilling companies. He preaches to men on the life of brotherly helpfulness and self-sacrifice as Jesus wants it, and all the facts of our business life contradict and tell a man to look out for himself, for nobody else will look out for him.

<sup>8</sup> *The Social Principles of Jesus* (Association Press, 1916), p. 151.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 154.

The minister's work is destined to partial failure. In some ways the higher and nobler it is, the greater will be the percentage of failure. Let every minister face this fact. Jesus warned men to consider the risk if they followed him and not to build a house if they had not the wherewithal to finish it or to follow him if they would not share his homelessness.<sup>12</sup>

[But though] the adverse forces are awful, tangible and the eye sees them everywhere, yet the minister believes that it is not only possible but probable that he will get a harvest, not only the grain he scattered, but one hundredfold. That is faith in the germinating power of the truth; faith in the nourishing forces in the human soul to receive the seed and feed it; faith in the power of God's Spirit to shine upon it and ripen it; faith in the moral order of the universe, faith in the victorious power of the redeeming God.<sup>13</sup>

Rauschenbusch, be it clearly said, never overlooked the needs of the individual as he pleaded for the regeneration and reconstruction of the total life of human society. He could endorse the sentiment of Goethe that "mankind is always progressing, but man is ever the same." Again and again Rauschenbusch emphasized:

The souls filled with the life of God are the fountains from which all life-giving impulses flow into the life of society. But a human soul is of eternal value for its own sake, and not merely for the effect it may have on society, just as our children are dear to us apart from any work they may do.<sup>14</sup>

Thus he wrote and spake in 1900. Two years later he pointed out in a German address on "The History of the Idea of the Kingdom of God":

The Individual is a permanent fact in God's universe, and the salvation of one single soul from selfishness and carnal living unto spiritual life and serving love is a growth of the Kingdom of God. But the Kingdom of God is more than the salvation of individuals. God wills not only holy men, but a holy humanity. Just as mankind cannot be redeemed without redeemed individuals, neither can individual men become truly sanctified without a sanctified community life which includes, nurtures, preserves them and for whose sake they live and labor.<sup>15</sup>

Five years later he pleaded: "Create a ganglion chain of redeemed personalities in a commonwealth, and all things become possible."

But all this, "the individual appropriation of salvation, the deliverance from the feeling of guilt and from the power of sin, the experience of the new life, the joy in the fatherly love of God and the

<sup>12</sup> Unpublished sermon "The Sower," delivered at Minneapolis, Minn., April 25, 1909. In the writer's Collection, pp. 3-4.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup> New York State Conference on Religion, *Rauschenbusch Scrapbook* No. I, p. 66, Nov. 20, 1900.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10. Delivered before students and faculty of the German Department of Rochester Theological Seminary, Sep. 12, 1902.

motivating power of the Holy Spirit," together with the most earnest endeavor for the defeat of social evil and the establishment of righteousness in the earth, Rauschenbusch conceives in terms of the Kingdom of God.

He knows full well that the Kingdom of God is divine in its origin, development, and ultimate consummation. It is God who "wants to turn humanity right side up, but he needs a fulcrum. Every saved soul is a fixed point on which God can rest his lever." God is yearning to redeem the world, therefore:

A divine world is ever pressing into this imperfect and sinful world, demanding admission and realization for its higher principles, and every inspired man is a channel through which the spirit of God can enter humanity. Every higher era must be built on a higher moral law and a purer expression of religion. Therefore the most immediate and constant need of Christianizing the social order is for more religious individuals.<sup>16</sup>

Rauschenbusch never thought of making social activity the *sine qua non* of Christian endeavor. On the contrary he warned against it, as he warned against ceremonialism and the revival of ritualism.

We do not want to substitute social activities for religion. If the Church comes to lean on social preachings and doings as a crutch because its religion has become paralytic, may the Lord have mercy on us all. We do not want less religion; we want more; but it must be a religion that gets its orientation from the Kingdom of God. To concentrate our efforts on personal salvation, as orthodoxy has done, or on soul culture, as liberalism has done, comes close to refined selfishness. All of us who have been trained in egoistic religion need a conversion to Christian Christianity, even if we are bishops or theological professors.<sup>17</sup>

Whitehead of Harvard has said that religion is what man does with his solitariness. Rauschenbusch understood that element of truth as few men do. One need only think of his beautiful *Prayers for the Social Awakening* or his poem *The Little Gate to God!* Yet, while he recognized that the social preacher was in danger of forgetting man's inmost needs, Rauschenbusch rightly pointed out that many an orthodox preacher had all too long overlooked the other great entity of human existence, man's collective sins and needs.

Regarding the charge that Rauschenbusch held a utopian idea of the Kingdom of God, may he speak in his own defense:

<sup>16</sup> *Christianizing the Social Order*, p. 460.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 464.

In asking for faith in the possibility of a new social order, we ask for no utopian delusion. We know that there is no perfection for man in this life. There is only growth toward perfection. In personal religion we look with seasoned suspicion at anyone who claims to be holy and perfect, yet we always tell men to become holy and to seek perfection. We make it a duty to seek what is unattainable. We shall never have a perfect social life, yet we must seek it with faith. We shall never abolish suffering. There will always be death and the empty chair and heart. There will always be the agony of love unreturned. Women will long for children and never press baby lips to their breasts. Men will long for fame and miss it. Imperfect moral insight will work hurt in the best conceivable social order. The strong will always have the impulse to exert their strength, and no system can be devised which can keep them from crowding and jostling the weaker. Increased social refinement will bring increased sensitiveness to pain. An American may suffer as much distress through a social slight as a Russian peasant under the knout. At best there is always but an approximation to a perfect social order. The Kingdom of God is always but coming. But every approximation to it is worth while.<sup>18</sup>

As we sum up our brief study of Walter Rauschenbusch we ask: What insights have we gained concerning the prophet of the Social Gospel? And what is the relevance of his "life and work" for our own day? Whatever the answer of the biased interpreter, this at least we may say with reasoned assurance: In Walter Rauschenbusch one discovers a rich Christian personality in whose thinking a deep mystical faith and a strong social passion are beautifully blended. His religion is one in which emotion and intellect, beauty and power, are happily joined. Rauschenbusch was an experimentalist whose life and work can be a perennial source of inspiration and challenge to all who would "seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness." Despite the noblest efforts war is still with us, insecurity and hunger haunt mankind in every continent, the pride of race corrodes men's hearts as seldom before in history, and evil is rampant everywhere. Cynics among the learned and mighty laugh the Christian to scorn, but with Padraic Pearse, the Irish rebel, we reply:

And the wise have pitied the fool that  
hath striven to give a life  
In the world of time and space, among the  
bulks of actual things,  
To a dream that was dreamed in the heart  
and that only the heart could hold.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 420-421.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in an article by Tom Finnegan, "Christian Social Thinking in Ireland," *Christianity and Society*, Winter, 1945, p. 14.

# Some Thoughts on the Reform of Protestant Worship

CYRIL C. RICHARDSON

*Liturgical reform not to be subject to individual whim but based on historical knowledge. Four suggestions for recovering the ancient art of worship.*

THE REFORM of the liturgy is becoming a chief interest among Catholics and Protestants alike. The study of primitive forms, which one way or another have been corrupted in the course of the church's history, has pointed to the need of serious revision in every liturgy in Christendom. Our increasing understanding of the psychology of worship, furthermore, has opened up new and challenging approaches to the subject.

Protestant churches have not always been wise in their revisions. There is, for instance, a current practice of filching snippets from the *Book of Common Prayer*, or even the *Roman Missal*, without a clear idea of the basic principles of liturgy. Indeed, the habit of framing liturgies on the "paste-and-scissors" method is rather widespread. There is, too, a misleading belief that any ritual or ceremony that is dramatic (or even pretty) can be profitably transported from its traditional context and added to a Protestant order of service.

The disastrous effects of these practices are everywhere apparent in churches that are busy with revision. We find Protestant "novenas"; we find ancient antiphons nestling side by side with "gospel" hymns; we find surpliced choirs leading in a minister who is robed in a *black* gown; we find cubelike altars in Protestant chancels, though why they should be this shape when they house no martyrs' relics remains a mystery. In short, Protestant revision has frequently been unaware that liturgical forms derive their meaning from their traditional context and find their significance in the unity of an order of worship.

It is not possible to discuss here the basic principles of liturgical revision. I must content myself with a more modest task: to inquire how we can improve upon the typical Protestant service without radically changing its essential meaning. Its form grew up in the Reformation to meet definite needs which the late medieval Mass was unable to fulfil. The Reformers aimed to provide a service intelligible to the people by

the use of the vernacular, to supply Christian education in faith and morals by stressing Bible reading and preaching, and to overcome the individualism of late medieval piety by framing services for congregational participation.

These are the keynotes of Reformed liturgies: education in the Word of God as the antidote to superstition, and the fellowship of worship as the antidote to individualism.

Both these aspects of worship have suffered through the course of Protestant history, and the rationalistic Enlightenment damaged them considerably. Education in the Word of God tended to become education in the word of man, while the fellowship of worship was superseded by the idea that the church was a concert-hall and the minister its chief actor. Having discarded the veneration of the saints, the Protestants came perilously near worshiping the preacher. For corporate worship was substituted individualistic listening. One went to *hear* So-and-so, rather than to worship God in the company of the faithful.

The result of this development has been tragic, for it has divested Protestant worship of the sense of *mystery*. There can be little doubt that the gravest defect of Reformation liturgy was its lack of sacramental forms capable of awakening depths of the religious consciousness which the more rational "Word" can never reach. Yet the Reformers, while handicapped by their overstress on education (a handicap necessitated by their warfare on superstition), nonetheless did the church a notable service. They framed liturgies that stressed the intelligible and corporate nature of worship. But their later descendants, instead of redressing the evils of too great a stress on education, added other evils of their own. Under the influence of the Enlightenment the principles of individualism and naturalism were combined with the defects of the Reformers. The result has been that Protestants have lost much of the art of worship.

How can it be recovered? Two ways are open—the drastic and the gradual. Both have much to be said for them, but here I shall only offer four suggestions along the latter line.

First, regarding the *Amen*. This should be the congregation's response to a prayer. It has now become a meaningless tag added by the minister, or even sung by the choir. Worst of all, its essential Christian meaning has been forgotten.

In Judaism, *Amen* signified, "So be it." It had an eschatological reference. It meant, "May this be so, when Messiah comes." Prayers



for the extension of God's glory over the earth, for the coming of the Kingdom, and so on, looked toward the future. They would not be fulfilled till Messiah appeared. In Christianity, however, *Amen* took on an entirely new meaning. The Kingdom *had* come: the Messiah *had* appeared; and *Amen* looked not to the future, but to the present. It was the ecstatic cry of the congregation, expressing the conviction that the Lord *had* come, that the Kingdom, while not fully realized, was even now in the hearts of the faithful. With this cry the whole congregation entered into the officiant's prayer by affirming the eternal reality of the promises of God, which (as St. Paul said) were *Amen* in Christ.<sup>1</sup> In the Heavenly Realm God's will was already done; redemption by the Messiah was already made perfect; and while on earth this was only realized *en arrabon*<sup>2</sup> (by way of installment, so to say), it was nonetheless realized. Nothing could defeat the final purposes of God, which had received their attestation in the *Amen* of Christ.

Thus, for the Christian, *Amen* to a petition did not voice a vague hope of the future, but affirmed a present reality. It gave point to our Lord's saying, "What things soever ye desire when ye pray, *believe* that ye receive them, and ye shall have them."<sup>3</sup> *Amen* was less the cry of hope, than of faith. It was an exclamation that, by God's grace, the faithful would act *as if* his promises were already fulfilled, and by so doing would bring them to pass on earth.

We must restore *Amen* to our congregations. The choir is not the congregation: much less is the minister. Furthermore, to a *said* prayer we need a *said Amen*; for nothing so destroys the significance of this impelling word, than to have it sung after a said prayer. It disrupts the unity of prayer in which the minister and congregation should be united. Only when prayers are chanted (as for acoustical reasons they always were till the time of Luther), is a chanted *Amen* appropriate.

My second suggestion concerns the so-called "pastoral prayer." The main difficulties of this prayer are its length, and the fact that it is sometimes indistinguishable from a sermon. It is liable to wander between informing God and informing the congregation on the state of the world. The purpose of a prayer is to *pray*; and a long, uninterrupted series of petitions, with its tendency to become a discourse, is

<sup>1</sup> Cf. II Corinthians 1:20.

<sup>2</sup> Ephesians 1:14.

<sup>3</sup> Mark 11:24.

a rather ineffectual method of accomplishing this end. The seated posture, moreover, of our Protestant congregations enhances its ineffectiveness.

What can we do about it? First, regarding posture. Either standing or kneeling is better than sitting. Standing (which was often retained in Lutheran churches) is the ancient way. Kneeling, or prostrating (which was the ancient method of kneeling) was regarded by the early church as the posture suitable for penitential seasons and hence inappropriate for the celebration of the Resurrection on Sundays. Psychologically there can be little doubt that the early church was right in this, for it had a deep feeling for the relation of the body to spiritual exercises. Unfortunately we have lost this sense of rhythm and bodily co-ordination, which in Catholic piety is so much better developed. We cannot enlarge on that theme here: we need only emphasize that lolling in a pew is no fit posture for approaching one's Creator.

But what of the pastoral prayer itself? Strangely enough the origin of this prayer is to be found in the Roman Canon,<sup>4</sup> which the Reformers so detested, and which is by no means a model consecration prayer. Omitting the reference to the Lord's Supper, which became so infrequently celebrated in Protestantism, the pastoral prayer was really a development of the intercessions in the Roman Canon. These intercessions had been transposed from their original place in the liturgy, which was at the close of the first part of the service before the "Anaphora." The transposition involved changing their form, which was one of the most unfortunate developments of liturgical history. The consecration prayer was originally fairly short. Comprising the themes of the Lord's Supper, it was said uninterruptedly by the bishop. The ancient intercessions, however, were very different in form, and it was only by their being swallowed up in the consecration prayer that their nature was so radically altered.

Their primitive form was one of the most perfect patterns of prayer that the church has produced. In a remarkable way it combined the principles of brevity, oral and silent prayer, corporateness, and diversity of ministry. Never did the early church give more keen expression to its nature as one body with different functions than in its mode of intercessory prayer.

<sup>4</sup>This is evident both from the place in which the prayer comes in Reformation liturgies and from the fact it is frequently concluded by the Lord's Supper.

Relics of this form are found in the intercessions for Good Friday in the *Roman Missal* and in the structure of prayer in some Gallican and Mozarabic rites. The form went something like this:

First, the deacon announced a topic for prayer: "Let us pray, dearly beloved, for . . . ." Then (in penitential seasons and perhaps sometimes on Sundays) the deacon bid the people kneel. There was an interval of silence, during which the whole congregation offered up their combined prayers for this one topic. There was no wandering of mind, or bewildering sequence of petitions. There was holy and directed silence. Then the subdeacon bid the people rise. Finally the bishop intoned a short collect, "collecting" (as the word suggests) the corporate petitions that had been offered.

One after another the various intercessions were treated in this way. There was no confusion: there was time to *pray* the petition (not just to *listen* to it); and laity and clergy alike had their appropriate functions in the scheme. Here the church was truly *one*, united in a corporate and diversified *action*, not divided between talking and listening.

Can we not restore this ancient form in our churches? We have to impress upon our congregations the need to pray rather than to listen, and we have to provide them with a way for doing this. But we need not go to the other extreme and introduce long periods of silence. Our congregations do not know what to do with undirected silence; their minds wander and are often less profitably engaged than in listening to the pastoral prayer, which, at worst, is often instructive. Total silence is a way of worship by itself. It demands much experience and a definite religious attitude that is hard to reconcile with classical Protestantism. But the ancient form of intercessory prayer can certainly be adapted to our usual order of worship. We can introduce it without the deacon and subdeacon, or perhaps their parts can be taken by the assistant minister. It will help our clergy, furthermore, to clarify their minds on just *what* we should pray for, and lead them away from the curse of indefinite intercessions to the blessings of definite ones. The experience of the church has clearly shown, for instance, that to pray vaguely for *all* the sick is by no means so effective as to pray earnestly for some particular sick persons. The psychological principle of attention is as applicable to the life of prayer as to the building of bridges.

That is not to say, of course, that indefinite prayers do not have their place. They do; but their place is not in the corporate interces-

sions. Indefinite prayers are symbols, phrased to draw out depths of the religious consciousness that definite forms cannot reach. They are like great works of art, into which the beholder can pour his own soul to receive it back again enriched, as he studies the picture. Psychologically speaking, they are powerful occasions of projection. They effect in words and rhythm what sacramental actions, with their taste, color, feeling, and so on, even more significantly effect. But even with words much can be accomplished, as with the General Confession, the Creed,<sup>5</sup> and the Lord's Prayer.<sup>6</sup>

My third suggestion relates to churches that have divided chancels. Ministers have a habit of going to the lectern or the pulpit during the singing of the last verse of a hymn. This is what might be called "jack-in-a-box" ceremonial. It is disturbing, if one is intent on singing a hymn, to look up at the end and suddenly find that the minister has surreptitiously changed his place. The art of ceremonial lies in doing necessary and even commonplace things with simple dignity. It is necessary for the minister to get to the lectern to read the lesson. But why should he hide his action behind a hymn, as if there had to be something clandestine about his movements? For Protestantism, the reading of the Bible should surely have an emphatic place in the liturgy; and to walk with silent dignity to the lectern would give point to the action of reading the lessons.

The dramatic ceremony of the Little Entrance in the Greek rite grew out of the need, in the early church, for the deacon to go to the *ambo*, and to have a light by which to read the manuscript of the gospel. The little procession gave dignity to the event, and the lighting of the candle naturally suggested the Lord of the gospel as the Light of the world. The elaborate features of the Little Entrance in the modern Greek rite do not lend themselves to Protestant imitation; but the way in which the early church developed its ceremonial from simple and necessary actions does offer us a profitable approach to the subject.

My final suggestion concerns the offertory. What could be more unhappy than to jingle coins in a plate while the choir is trying to sing an anthem? Yet that occurs in thousands of our churches Sunday after Sunday.

<sup>5</sup>This should be introduced by the plural "We believe," as it anciently was, not by the individualistic "I believe."

<sup>6</sup>This should never conclude a prayer, being a separate series of petitions by itself.

The offertory will always remain a difficult problem of ceremonial until we restore the Lord's Supper as the regular Sunday service. But on that drastic and necessary revision we cannot elaborate here. It must suffice to point out that recent study of the Reformers has clearly shown that they desired the weekly celebration of the Eucharist.<sup>7</sup> They were prevented, however, from realizing their ideal by political pressures and popular indifference.

The offertory is really the first step in the offering of the bread and cup of the Passion and Resurrection of the Lord. The ancient offertory was done in silence by the deacons who collected the loaves of bread and flasks of wine, which each of the congregation brought for the Lord's Supper. Other offerings of fruit, cheese, olives, and so on, were included. We do not know for certain how money was deposited with the bishop, but perhaps it was privately after the Eucharist. The emphasis came upon offerings *in kind*, for these were vivid symbols of Christian self-offering. By them the believer rendered back to God with thanksgiving the gifts he had so bountifully bestowed; and by them the Christian sacrificed to God the work of *his* own hands—a point Irenaeus stresses in referring to the bread as "manufactured," not just God's wheat.

Our offertory labors under two difficulties. We do it with money, and we do it without reference to the most sacred mystery of Christian worship—the offering of the bread and cup of the Holy Supper.

Yet we can still improve upon it. In the first place, let it be done without an anthem, and perhaps in silence. Really effective ceremonial is always silent. Secondly, we can have occasions when gifts in kind are brought, and when the whole congregation, or their true representatives (who are men, women, and children rather than ushers) bring the gifts up to the holy table. This will rectify some abuses; but, as I have said, the offertory as we have it is a poor ceremonial climax to a service. It is unfortunate, too, that it stands alone as the one sacred *action* in which the congregation participates. It is really only the beginning of a service, for the climax should be a ceremony far more rich in religious meaning and power—the celebration of the offering of Christ for the redemption of the world.

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<sup>7</sup> Calvin even went so far as to call the separation of the Service of the Word from that of the Sacrament, "an invention of the devil."



# The Younger Churches and the World Council

J. W. DECKER

*The Younger Churches and their desire for active membership in the World Council—Dr. Decker describes organizational problems and plans.*

THE YOUNGER CHURCHES have hitherto had a very limited share in the World Council of Churches (hereafter WCC). There have been a number of obvious reasons for this. In the first place the WCC as the result of the fusing of the Faith and Order and the Life and Work Movements has been largely Western- (European and North American) centered. The outbreak of the second World War just as the proposal for the WCC was well launched gave it immediate and pressing opportunities for service in war-torn Europe and more or less limited its opportunities for expansion into and contact with more distant parts of the world. Its comparative absorption in European problems has thus been both natural and necessary.

Secondly, in the war years the WCC has been (and still is) "in process of formation" and therefore compelled to devote a large amount of its attention to immediate problems of organization and of basic policy-making.

Thirdly, and most important, the younger churches enjoyed a satisfactory ecumenical relationship, mainly through their link with the International Missionary Council (hereafter IMC), organized in 1921 and a going concern for a quarter of a century. With their limitations in finance and personnel and the difficulties and expense of world travel, the strongest of the younger churches had little disposition or ability to seek other relationships. Furthermore, the long-established ties of co-operation and mutual understanding bound them (and still binds them) in the very satisfying fellowship which the IMC affords.

But this is not the whole story. The WCC has from the first had some younger church participation and has never left the younger churches out of its hopes and plans. It has been aware that no organization that left the younger churches out could legitimately claim to be ecumenical. It has consistently desired and planned that the younger



churches should be a part of the WCC from its very beginning. Some younger churches were invited to the conference in 1937 at Oxford and Edinburgh and so received invitations to membership in the WCC. That invitation was also extended to a limited number of younger churches not present at the 1937 conferences. We can find no written record of the exact specifications that governed these invitations, but it is clear that the officary of the IMC was fully consulted and most of the major younger churches were included. Among notable exceptions were the Batak Church in Indonesia and the Baptist Churches in Burma. Only one church in Africa, the African Methodist Episcopal Church in South Africa, was invited. Twelve have accepted this invitation.<sup>1</sup> There have been no declinations but twenty have not replied, some of these obviously because wartime difficulties prevented adequate consideration.<sup>2</sup>

Nor should one neglect the fact that the growing self-consciousness of the younger churches as *churches* has created a real desire to join the WCC. They recognize the value of the relationship to the IMC, but regard it and the missionary boards as limited by their functional character as missionary organizations. They desire as *churches* to link up directly with other churches. The fact that there is sometimes wishful thinking as to the practical results of such a link does not invalidate a legitimate desire. Nor does it satisfy to point out that in many cases a missionary board is a sort of "state department" of the supporting church and so organically a part of that church.

Perhaps this is the place to explain a radical difference in the organization of the IMC from that of the WCC. The constituent membership of the IMC is in the national organizations, the national missionary conferences in the sending countries (e.g. the Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain and Ireland) and the national Christian councils like those of China or India. The national Christian councils in turn are largely, though usually not exclusively, constituted by the churches of their respective areas. But in the case of the WCC a church has direct membership in the WCC, though some possible advisory use of national organizations of churches is envisaged. More of this later.

<sup>1</sup> *Brasil*: Methodist Church of Brazil. *China*: Church of Christ in China. *India*: Church of India, Burma, and Ceylon; Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India; Mar Thoma Syrian Church of Malabar; South India United Church. *Mexico*: Methodist Church of Mexico. *Netherlands East Indies*: Protestant Church of the Netherlands East Indies. *Philippine Islands*: United Evangelical Church of the Philippines. *South Africa*: Congregational Union of South Africa; Methodist Church. *West Indies*: Anglican Church of the West Indies.

<sup>2</sup> For example, important churches in Japan, Korea, China, and the Philippines.

The attitude of the IMC with regard to full participation of the younger churches in the WCC has from the beginning been wholly favorable. This has been a corollary of the close collaboration between the two world organizations from the initiation of the proposal for the setting up of the WCC. It should be remembered that the late William Paton was for more than five years previous to his death in 1943 a secretary of both. Thus at Madras in 1938 the IMC took formal action as follows:

We heartily welcome the desire expressed by the Provisional Committee of the proposed World Council of Churches at its meeting in Utrecht, Holland, May, 1938, that the churches of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific Islands be invited to become members of the World Council of Churches, and we recommend that the Committee of the International Missionary Council working through the various National Christian Councils or such other means as would be most acceptable to the churches concerned further the carrying out of plans for ensuring such representation, bearing in mind the fact that all members of the Assembly and the Central Committee of the proposed World Council of Churches must be representatives of churches or groups of churches.

The IMC went on to recommend the creation of a joint committee, with five appointees from each organization and Drs. Mott and Paton respectively chairman and secretary, "with special reference to fostering the best working arrangements between the churches of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific Islands and the World Council of Churches."

The WCC responded favorably to this suggestion and the committee was appointed. The war intervened and thus the first meeting of the Joint Committee was not held until it was called together in February of 1946 at Geneva. To this we shall return later.

We now have the history and background of our subject well before us. The problem of the relationship of the younger churches to the WCC divides itself into two main parts: (1) Membership or status, (2) Administrative relationships or functioning. We shall treat these in order.

With regard to membership we begin by quoting the first Article and the first paragraph of the second Article of the proposed constitution of the WCC:

#### I. Basis

The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. It is constituted for the discharge of the functions set out below.

#### II. Membership

All churches shall be eligible for membership in the World Council which express their agreement with the basis upon which the Council is founded.

When the above is applied to the younger churches one important question emerges, namely, "At what point does a nascent church pass from its status as an extension or an appendage of a foreign mission and become an autonomous church in its own right?" There is no easy or clear-cut answer to this question. After 1938 the officary of the IMC gave long and intensive study to it which included a careful examination of the varying and infinitely complex situations of many of the most eligible younger churches. Two conclusions resulted. First, that there was no simple rule of thumb that could be applied and which would afford an answer fair to all. One of these officers reported that he and his colleagues "have found it impracticable and undesirable to draw a dividing line between 'churches' and 'nascent churches.' The 'nascent churches' are immeasurably important because of the great populations in which they are placed and because their present tasks are great, while their future growth and weight cannot be estimated."<sup>3</sup> And secondly, that the WCC should set its own standards and make its own decisions with regard to eligibility to membership. The IMC stood ready at all times to give any information desired which it had or could secure, but responsible determination rested with the WCC. Accordingly the WCC previous to the Geneva meetings did some preliminary work on further criteria which should govern eligibility for membership, and this was known to the Joint Committee when it met. The Joint Committee recommended: "That the Provisional Committee shall establish some general criteria for membership in the World Council of Churches, which shall be applicable to all churches, 'older' no less than 'younger.'"

The Joint Committee further recommended that among these criteria should be one on the autonomy of the church and submitted a possible text. It also recommended that in the case of the younger churches the WCC "may call on the officers of the International Missionary Council for information as to the facts about those churches which it needs to know."

At a later meeting of the Ad Interim Committee of the IMC and of the Provisional Committee of the WCC the report of the Joint Committee was adopted and the criteria for eligibility were formulated, including the suggested statement on autonomy slightly amended. The action of the Provisional Committee was as follows:

Pending the Assembly the following criteria shall be applied, in addition to the primary requirement stated in Article II of the Constitution that churches

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<sup>3</sup> From an unpublished paper by A. L. Warnshuis.

eligible for membership shall be those "which express their agreement with the basis upon which the Council is founded."

a) *Autonomy*: A church which is to be admitted must give evidence of autonomy. An autonomous church is one which while recognizing the essential interdependence of the churches, particularly those of the same confession, is responsible to no other church for the conduct of its own life, including the training, ordination, and maintenance of its ministry, the propagation of the Christian Message, the determination of relationships with other churches, and the use of funds at its disposal from whatever source.

b) *Membership of confessional families*: Churches which are recognized as members of one of the confessional or denominational world alliances are to be admitted if the alliance concerned recommends their admission.

c) *Stability*: A church which is to be admitted should have had a sufficiently long life to have become recognized as a church by its sister churches, and should have an established program of Christian nurture and evangelism. The question of size is recognized as pertinent to stability.<sup>4</sup>

Clearly, real progress has been made toward a solution of this problem of membership or status. The decision making the new criteria applicable to all is excellent. The statement on autonomy is exceedingly general and even ambiguous at several points, and this could hardly be avoided; but interpretation of it will call for accurate information as well as skilled judgment carefully adapted to the facts. Standing as a full member of a recognized denominational or confessional family is of obvious significance and importance. The provision on stability is flexible and may be made very valuable. Probably it will prove most valuable of all.

With this behind them, the officers of the WCC are already pushing the matter of further invitations to younger churches that promise to be eligible and in this effort they will have every assistance from the officers of the IMC.

The second major part of the problem of the relationship of the younger churches to the WCC is that of administrative relationship or functioning. Again we must turn to the proposed constitution of the WCC. That provides for an Assembly of not more than 450 members specifically allocated by number to each of the major regions (e.g. ninety to the United States and Canada as one), or groups (e.g. the Eastern Orthodox) throughout the world, and a Central Committee of not more than ninety members similarly allocated and consisting of one-fifth of the Assembly members for each major region or group, in each case the

<sup>4</sup> This text was taken from the papers available at the meeting and has not been checked with the minutes of the World Council of Churches Provisional Committee.

members to be allocated or appointed by the churches concerned as they may decide. The constitution also states: "The Assembly shall be composed of official representatives of the churches or groups of churches." Likewise, the Central Committee shall consist of "members designated by the churches, or groups of churches, from among persons whom these churches have elected as members of the Assembly." A further complexity appears: "The members of the Assembly shall be both clerical and lay persons—men and women."

How this is to be done for the ninety members of the Assembly or the eighteen members of the Central Committee for the United States and Canada presents serious problems. An attempt to meet them in part has been made by the organization of an "American Committee for the World Council of Churches," which in some respects is an unfortunate duplication of the Federal Council of Churches. But the fact had to be faced that the membership of the WCC in the United States was far from identical with that of the Federal Council, which therefore could hardly act on behalf of the WCC in the United States.

But consider the far worse plight of the younger churches. For the Assembly, the allocation of "50, representing the churches of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific Islands, to be appointed by them as they may decide." For the Central Committee, "10, of whom at least two shall be lay persons, representing the churches of Asia, Africa, Latin America, and the Pacific Islands, to be appointed by them as they may decide." When one considers the vast distances, the relatively small churches, with limited resources in men and money, and the differences in history and outlook, these provisions taken at face value seem a *reductio ad absurdum*. How could the requisite appointments ever be made? How could they be made representative in any real sense? Some more suitable arrangement had to be devised or younger church membership in the WCC would be in effect membership without participation, which satisfies nobody. The IMC struggled with this problem at Madras with little success. It gave up the attempt to sub-allocate the fifty members of the Assembly to smaller regions. For the ten on the Central Committee it suggested that the number be increased to eleven and possible sub-allocations were suggested. Diligent further study was given to the problem and from this study there emerged the urgent recommendation that the constitution of the WCC ultimately be modified to provide for more specific use of the already existent national constituents of the



IMC. A valuable precedent has already been established in Canada and Britain, where the Canadian Council of Churches and the British Council of Churches care in their respective countries for the interests as a whole of the WCC, without any impairment of the *direct membership relation* of a given church to the WCC. Some have urged that the national Christian councils that are now *constituent* members of the IMC also be recognized by the WCC as its *constituent* area organizations. But it would appear that making them something less than *constituent* organizations would suffice, by following closely the Canadian and British precedents. Little progress was made on this point at Geneva, mainly because it would involve constitutional modifications for the WCC, which cannot wisely be attempted until the constituting Assembly meets in 1948. A further complication is the prospect that a shift in the whole constitutional plan to a confessional (or denominational) basis will be urged on the Assembly.

However, Geneva did do something. The Joint Committee recommended the following, which was later approved by both IMC and WCC, as a part of its report:

That churches admitted to the World Council shall have direct representation in the Assembly. But in certain cases where numerical considerations, geographical position, or confessional affinity make group representation desirable this representation shall be secured by duly elected delegates from a group of churches.

As regards the ten places allocated to these churches on the Central Committee, we recommend (as a substitute for the Madras recommendation that the number be increased to eleven) that the number of places remain the same, with the understanding that the delegates from those churches at the Assembly shall meet together and choose the ten persons to serve on the Central Committee.

The provision "That churches admitted to the World Council shall have direct representation in the Assembly," even qualified as it is in the sentence following, represents a new departure for the WCC. It was approved by the WCC with some reluctance, as strict adherence to it, especially if a large number of relatively small younger churches are admitted, might very well result in an Assembly beyond the 450 in number and thus unwieldy and inefficient in discussion and decision. For the time being the point is yielded, and that is all one could ask in a situation admittedly provisional. Details are yet to be worked out. A weakness, not confined to the younger churches but more serious in their case, is the certainty that few or no lay men or women will be chosen as representatives where given churches have only a single representative each.

The solution re the Central Committee was hailed by all as an excel-



lent one. In implementing it due use will have to be made of some sort of scheme to divide the allocations such as was proposed at Madras, so that the Central Committee may be roughly representative of all major regions of the younger churches.

To sum up, definite and considerable progress has been made in clearing the ground for further invitations to the younger churches. Their adherence to the WCC will bring to it the men and women from great areas where vast populations are concentrated, populations which have a new and significant part to play in the life of our world. The WCC will be more truly ecumenical than it could be otherwise, and there will be less danger of its absorption in problems of Europe and North America. The colored races will have a more adequate opportunity to make their contribution to the WCC and to share in its fellowship and insights. The voice of colonial peoples will be heard in its councils. Still more important, these younger churches will be a witness in themselves to the power of and the necessity for a dynamic evangelism, thus serving to make the Ecumenical Church more mission-conscious, to use the words of Dr. Hendrik Kraemer at Geneva.

In the matter of effective participation by the younger churches in the world-wide tasks of the WCC there are serious practical obstacles to be overcome. But the fine spirit of mutual confidence and appreciation and the plans for growing collaboration between the IMC and the WCC—not touched on in this limited paper—are the best possible guarantees that these obstacles will be surmounted. This is a heartening prospect in a world "anxious and bewildered and full of pain and fear,"<sup>a</sup> a world in which a genuinely ecumenical fellowship can contribute so much.

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<sup>a</sup> Oxford Conference, 1937.

# Mystic's Way: A Study of Ralph Waldo Emerson

MYRON FORREST WICKE

*The Sage of Concord was not merely an aphorist or a transcendental dreamer, but a genuine mystic, whose thinking like his life was coherent and disciplined.*

LONG accepted as a major figure in American culture, Ralph Waldo Emerson was also one of the true religious geniuses of America. He has not, however, received general recognition for his religious achievement. Perhaps no man is more frequently quoted from the pulpit and in literature; yet there is a considerable tendency to regard his religious utterances as stimulating aphorisms but not as part of a consistent, coherent religious point of view. Hence the view is not uncommon which considers Emerson, in spite of his many wise sayings, either a Yankee philosopher of the cracker-barrel variety or a wild dreamer of transcendental impossibilities. In the first view Emerson takes on the color of a Will Rogers in frock coat with Harvard accent and Boston morals. In the other view he is interesting but—to quote the word of Henry Adams—"naïf."<sup>1</sup>

A careful and complete reading of Emerson shows him to be neither "naïf" nor merely a composer of disjointed though interesting epigrams. Emerson is fundamentally a mystic, and only in terms of mysticism does his thought gain coherence and weight. Viewed thus, however, his total work shows unity and power seldom duplicated in America.

As a mystic Emerson assumed that union with Reality was made possible by the relation of the Over-Soul to the individual soul. The experience of union with the Divine was, he held, characterized by ineffability, insight, certainty, and joy; and union occurred during states of passivity.

Nevertheless, in Emerson is to be found almost none of the jargon associated with best-known mystics. He only occasionally used the word "mystic." For this reason his readers usually fail to perceive the essential mysticism of his point of view. In the same manner the strenuous, almost stereotyped, disciplinary schedule of the mystic, his concern with

<sup>1</sup> *The Education of Henry Adams*. New York: Random House, 1931, p. 35.

the "Ladder of Perfection," the stages through which he disciplined himself, is also missing in Emerson. Utterly foreign to him as well was the traditional mystical vocabulary which included such terms as purgation, mortification, and "The Dark Night of the Soul." But Emerson was a carefully disciplined man, and through his discipline came mystical illuminations accompanied by rapture and at times ecstasy. The main features of this discipline and the illuminations he received are the problems of this study. As far as possible Emerson will be allowed to speak in his own words, not only from the *Essays* and *Poems*, but also from the more intimate and more revealing *Journals*, which comprise one of the noblest of spiritual autobiographies.

### "SIMPLICITY, READING, SOLITUDE"

Simplicity, the first rule of the Emersonian discipline, is not strange to New England, especially to the New England of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Simplicity grew easily out of the rocky Massachusetts fields and out of the stern Puritanism which was for so long regnant there. "To go without was a shibboleth with him," says Emerson's biographer Woodberry, "and no phrase is more characteristic of what was most honest, proud, and strong in the old New England life."<sup>2</sup> Emerson recognized his indebtedness to this Puritan New England trait and upon more than one occasion admitted it. In his *Journals* in 1840 he wrote:

I acknowledge (with surprise that I could ever forget it) the debt of myself and my brothers to that old religion which, in those years, still dwelt like a Sabbath peace in the country population of New England, which taught privation, self-denial, and sorrow. A man was born, not for prosperity, but to suffer for the benefit of others, like the noble rock-maple tree which all around the villages bleeds for the service of man.<sup>3</sup>

The lesson of going without was one learned early in the Emerson home. When the poet was only eight his father died, leaving a widow and six children. The Emerson boys were, according to the volatile Aunt Mary Moody Emerson, "born to be educated," for education was one of the few necessities; and educated they were. Hardship was a constant guest of the family. During one winter Ralph and his brother Edward attended school only on alternate days, since they had to share one overcoat. In such circumstances simplicity came easy—but the habit

<sup>2</sup> Woodberry, George E., *Ralph Waldo Emerson*. New York: Macmillan, 1926, p. 184.

<sup>3</sup> *Journals*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1909-14. V, 543.

of life never changed. "I have never a dollar to spend on a fancy," he wrote to Carlyle in 1838, but "as no wise man ever was rich in the sense of *freedom* to spend, because of the inundation of claims, so neither am I, who am not wise."<sup>4</sup>

This "inundation of claims" Emerson recognized as one of the chief hazards of the spiritual life, and his own biography is a record of his determination to maintain simplicity. His friends testify to the success he achieved in this respect. Emerson expressed his wishes for his home in striking terms:

I desire that my housekeeping should be clean and sweet and that it should not shame or annoy me. I desire that it should appear in all its arrangements that human culture is the end to which that house is built and garnished. I wish my house to be a college, open as the air to all to whom I spiritually belong, and who belong to me. . . . I do not wish that it should be a confectioner's shop wherein eaters and drinkers may get strawberries and champagne.<sup>5</sup>

Years later, Moncure Conway wrote that "simplicity, good taste, comfort, hospitality, sincerity, were the furniture of this Concord home."

"If my debts," Emerson said once, "as they threaten, should consume what money I have, I should live just as I do now: I should eat worse food, and wear a coarser coat, and should wander in a potato patch instead of in a wood—but it is I, and not my twelve hundred dollars a year, that love God."<sup>6</sup>

This simplicity, complemented by true generosity, led Emerson to the fine serenity which so vividly characterized him throughout his life. It made him impervious to the worries that come so naturally to people much concerned with property and its possession. It enabled him to leave the assured financial comfort of the pulpit for the dangerous road of the lecturer and writer. It brought him more than once, as his letters especially show, to the point of financial danger. But since he lived simply, the pinch never meant disaster. Financial troubles were popguns and not cracks of doom, and they were always to be assessed correctly.

A second rule in the Emersonian discipline is to be deduced from his theory of reading, a theory which he followed carefully and consistently. Emerson was a voracious reader, but his reading was done in a way distinctively his own, with great thought to avoiding the danger

<sup>4</sup> Rusk, Ralph L., *Letters of Ralph Waldo Emerson*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1939. IV, 4.

<sup>5</sup> *Journals*, V, 239.

<sup>6</sup> *Journals*, V, 470.

of becoming a mere parrot of the ideas of other people. Here is a crucial matter. How shall one who cherishes above all learning the illuminations of the solitary hour, who must preach the doctrine of a self-reliance which is in its essence a reliance upon the immanent God, properly evaluate the voices of other men and women? How shall he retain his own independence of soul and mind and still use well the majestic mind of the past? This has always been a major problem for the mystic and Emerson faced it in a thoroughly characteristic way.

There are few journal notes to show at what time in his career Emerson developed his unique use of books. But in an early entry he expressed concern over his inclination to read what he liked, and to stroll from book to book; a "cardinal vice of intellectual dissipation"<sup>7</sup> he called it. There are, incidentally, few favorable comments on his college work as a whole. Perhaps his remark on having "newly escaped from college" is an oblique commentary on his undergraduate experiences. Nevertheless, at Harvard Emerson had access to a large library, and he used his opportunities in a wide reading.

Throughout his career Emerson had a high regard for books. His essays on "The American Scholar" and "Books" are concentrated evidence of this regard, but similar opinions appear frequently. The mind of the past could not, he knew, be ignored save at the peril of the individual. Narrow reading, accordingly, made "narrow religion." Of books he wrote, "Some books leave us free and some books make us free,"<sup>8</sup> and "There are books which take rank in our life with parents and lovers and passionate experiences, so medicinal, so stringent, so authoritative."<sup>9</sup>

Three specific functions of the book Emerson found valid. Books were useful in teaching the elements, as of history and the exact sciences. Secondly, they proved the theory of the universal mind, for "they impress us with the conviction that one nature wrote and the same reads." But most important, books were valuable for their "spermatic influence," for their inspirational character, for their unique ability to get the reader started to thinking for himself. This is the critical feature in the Emersonian theory of reading. He read mainly for "lusters," the brilliant sentences in which the poet's ideas had burst into flame, had taken the glow of inevitability and of finality. "I am," he wrote once, "concerned

<sup>7</sup> *Journals*, II, 55.

<sup>8</sup> *Journals*, VI, 525.

<sup>9</sup> *Works*, VII, 190.

only with good sentences,"<sup>10</sup> and again, "Literature is a heap of verbs and nouns enclosing an intuition or two."<sup>11</sup> The luster was to be cherished because it aided the reader in the moments when his own inspiration was at low ebb, when revelation lagged. This was the major service of the book.

To note Emerson's use of these lusters and of those original with him is to explain in part his own creative processes. Brilliant lines are recorded in his *Journal* first in the form in which he found them in his reading or as he himself first conceived them. Hence he called the *Journals* his "savings bank." After a time the same idea is likely to appear in the *Journals* again, this time restated. Still later it may appear in more sharply revised form in an address, and then in final form in the printed essay. Needless to say, the finished product is essentially new, though the source of the inspiration may be clear.

When Emerson said boldly that "books are for the scholar's idle time" he was not indulging in rhetorical exaggeration. He meant it. For the danger which he saw clearly was that one might too readily become a slave to the book and fail to do one's own thinking.

Man thinking must not be subdued by his instruments. When he can read God directly, the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their reading. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must—when the sun is hid and the stars withdraw their shining—we repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the East again, where the dawn is. We hear that we may speak.<sup>12</sup>

Emerson had, says Rusk, "strong defenses against the encroachments upon his ideas and clung to the belief that one's private revelation of truth must be respected first."<sup>13</sup> "That book is good which puts me in a working mood," wrote Emerson. He regarded slavish trust in the book as a danger to his own perceptive powers, to his personal realization of truth.

Parenthetically such a theory of reading led to dangers as real as those which arose from an overtrust in books. Emerson was not a scholar in the modern sense. He was too incautious of sources, too careless of exact translation, and far too unsystematic in his reading. Nor was he well equipped in languages, admitting an unwillingness to read foreign authors in the original. He tended to use mystical interpretations when-

<sup>10</sup> Cabot, J. E., *Memoirs*, 290.

<sup>11</sup> *Journals*, V, 102.

<sup>12</sup> *Works*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1903-04. I, 91.

<sup>13</sup> Rusk, *op. cit.*, LXIV.



ever they were at hand. Plato was his first love, but it was a Plato interpreted by Thomas Taylor, Neoplatonist and mystic. When the Bohn translation appeared, which sought to present Plato without what one scholar has called "the absurd mysticism which the Neoplatonists introduced into their interpretations,"<sup>14</sup> Emerson was only mildly interested, and remained at heart a Neoplatonist. Kantian transcendentalism came to him also in mystically interpreted form through the mind of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. When he read Swedenborg, of whom he wrote a good deal, he used the mystical core and discarded the rest as useless to his purpose. His attitude to Swedenborg brought down upon his head sharp criticisms from modern Swedenborgians, of whom Clarence Hotson is characteristic. Hotson taxes Emerson with giving "the New Jerusalem Church people credit for far more mysticism, by a good deal, than they possessed."<sup>15</sup> Emerson himself anticipated the criticisms, however, by saying of Plotinus and Swedenborg, "My debt to them is for a few thoughts." Emerson's love of Quaker attitudes is well known. When he went to his retreat in the White Mountains to consider resignation from the church, he carried with him two books on the Quakers, one a life of George Fox.

Thus the second element in his discipline was a careful reading habit, which aimed at the enrichment of his intellectual life, but which cautiously guarded the integrity of his own mind, and which recognized in books a potential block to Divine illumination. It was his inclination likewise to read books in which mystical attitudes were paramount.

A third feature of Emerson's religious discipline was the practice of solitude and meditation, a practice which he never surrendered and always recommended to others. "Emerson practiced," said Samuel Crothers, "an art which has been thought to be lost, the art of meditation. The fruit of his meditations he offered to all those whom it might concern."<sup>16</sup> Emerson's reading practices tie in closely with his use of solitude. Solitude acquainted Emerson with his own thoughts. But when inspiration ran low, the fruits of his reading might set the current flowing again.

As a boy Emerson with his brother visited the Maine woods and later wrote his Aunt Mary that although he had found enjoyment in the

<sup>14</sup> Harrison, J. S., *The Teachers of Emerson*. New York: Sturgis & Walton, 1910, p. 5.

<sup>15</sup> Hotson, Clarence, "The Christian Critics and Mr. Emerson," *New England Quarterly* XI, 29-47.

<sup>16</sup> Crothers, Samuel M., *Ralph Waldo Emerson: How to Know Him*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1921, p. 11.

loneliness of the woods, he found no inspiration there. The answer he received, according to his son Edward, was: "You should have gone alone." This advice Emerson followed throughout the rest of his life. In writing later of his college days he noted in his Journal: "By all means give the youth solitude . . . and for the like reason give him a chamber alone—and that was the best thing I found in college."<sup>17</sup> In his practice of solitude Emerson was following the scriptural injunction: "Be still and know that I am God." Walt Whitman said of himself, "I loaf and invite my soul." Emerson stated it in his own way: "Embrace solitude as a bride." His own practice he commended to others. To the scholar he said:

Sit alone: in your arrangements for residence see you have a chamber to yourself, though you sell your cot and wear a blanket. Keep a journal; pay so much honor to the visits of Truth to your mind to record them.<sup>18</sup>

Especially did he recommend morning hours for meditation. "Defend the morning" was his admonition.

It is characteristic of Emerson that he found the practice of meditation successful in his chamber alone, but also in Nature. Out-of-doors every natural element seemed to minister to his spirit. The beauty, the calmness, the perspective, the quiet—all these worked upon him and left him passive and ready. He might well have called his essays "Forest Essays" as he had once considered doing, for in the forest "an active enchantment seemed to reach his dust." Like Thoreau, Emerson knew that others might consider his trips to the woods as mere loafing, and like Thoreau he might have written:

If a man walk in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer, but if he spends his whole day as a speculator, shearing off these woods and making earth bald before her time, he is esteemed an industrious and enterprising citizen.<sup>19</sup>

But Emerson was never deterred by what the people thought, and the woods continued to be a haven and a temple.

During his solitude Emerson's reading played perhaps a more important role than he himself admitted or realized. In *The Road to Xanadu*, an illuminating study of Coleridge's creative imagination, Professor John L. Lowes shows conclusively how the poet's imagination uses in its own way the material which the "well," the subconscious, stores

<sup>17</sup> *Journals*, I, 1.

<sup>18</sup> *Works*, VI, XVII.

<sup>19</sup> Thoreau, Henry D., *A Yankee in Canada*, p. 250.

up. "To follow Coleridge through his writing is to retrace the obliterated vestiges of his reading."<sup>20</sup> Much the same, I believe, might be shown about Emerson's work. Probably the lusters did more than start inspiration flowing; probably they were themselves in many instances the inspiration. But explain the phenomenon as one may, Emerson felt moments of revelation in his solitary periods, and these were to him inspiration, strength, renewal of vision. So he could write earnestly:

I am sure of this, that by going much alone a man will get more of a noble courage in thought and word than from all the wisdom that is in books. He will come to hear God speak as audibly through his own lips as ever He did by the mouth of Moses or Isaiah or Milton. "For Nature never did betray the heart that loved her." Such revelations as were made to George Fox or Emanuel Swedenborg are only made in the woods or in the closet.<sup>21</sup>

Poetically he rephrased it thus:

The word by seers or sibyls told  
In groves of oak or fanes of gold,  
Still floats upon the morning wind,  
Still whispers to the willing mind.  
One accent of the Holy Ghost  
The heedless world hath never lost.<sup>22</sup>

"Danger," he insisted, "is when men will not keep quiet."

#### "THE BLESSED MOOD"

A studied simplicity, a wide but guarded use of books, and a consistent practice of solitary meditation—these comprise essentially the Emersonian discipline. But more important to Emerson was the fact that he was led directly to illuminations, the source of which he could not explain, but which were significantly warmed by an exultation of spirit, a rapture leading at times into sheer ecstasy. Thus the habits of life led straight to what Wordsworth in his "Tintern Abbey" called "the blessed mood" wherein

. . . with an eye made quiet by the power of harmony, and the deep power of joy, we see into the life of things.

That Emerson felt the elevated moments of illumination to be a product of the disciplined life is clear from reiterated remarks on the subject. Early in his career he wrote:

The company in which we live will hardly bear to be told that every man should be open to ecstasy or a divine illumination, and his daily walk elevated by

<sup>20</sup> Lowes, John L., *The Road to Xanadu*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., 1927, p. 37.

<sup>21</sup> *Journals*, III, 222.

<sup>22</sup> *Works*, IX, 8, "The Problem."

intercourse with the spiritual world. . . . Yet I suppose none of my auditors will deny that we ought to seek to establish ourselves in such disciplines and courses as will deserve that guidance and clearer communication with the spiritual world.<sup>28</sup>

At this point comparison with Wordsworth is not only natural but nearly inevitable; for while Emerson felt personally drawn to Carlyle, he was nevertheless most like Wordsworth. The English romanticist, though considerably older than Emerson, had passed through similar intellectual and spiritual experiences, and his earlier poetry vigorously fortified Emerson in his spiritual quest. Wordsworth too knew the need of a careful discipline. In her study *Mysticism in English Literature* Caroline Spurgeon points out:

The mystic vision was not attained by [Wordsworth], any more than by others, without deliberate renunciation. He lays great stress upon this; and yet it is a point in his teaching sometimes overlooked.<sup>29</sup>

Dean Inge describes Wordsworth's discipline as one "involving continual self-denial."<sup>30</sup> Wordsworth's attitude toward his discipline is clearly expressed in *The Prelude*, his magnificent autobiographical poem.

Whatever the psychological explanation of mystical states of insight, it is clear that these are characteristically accompanied by exultation rising into ecstasy, ineffable joyfulness, and a certainty that make the moments of "the blessed mood" singularly authoritative for future living. Many passages in Emerson may be used to illustrate his own expressions of these moments of rapture. Perhaps the finest of these is the celebrated section from *Nature*:

Standing on the bare ground—my head bathed by the blithe air and uplifted into infinite space—all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part and parcel of God.<sup>31</sup>

Again in his *Journal* written when he was thirty-four, Emerson noted:

A certain wandering light comes to me which I instantly perceive to be the cause of causes. It transcends all proving. It is itself the ground of being; and I see that it is not one, and I another, but this is the life of my life. That is one fact then; that in certain moments I have known that I existed directly from God, and am, as it were, His organ, and in my ultimate consciousness am He.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>28</sup> *Works*, II, 280-81.

<sup>29</sup> Spurgeon, Caroline, *Mysticism in English Literature*. New York: Putnam, 1913, p. 64.

<sup>30</sup> Inge, W. R., *Studies of English Mystics*. London: John Murray, 1907, p. 188.

<sup>31</sup> *Works*, I, 10.

<sup>32</sup> *Journals*, IV, 242-49.

Over twenty years later he wrote:

If I recall the happiest hours of existence, those which really make man an inmate of a better world, it is a lonely and undescribed joy; but it is the door to joys that ear hath not heard nor eye seen.<sup>28</sup>

And again in *The Method of Nature* he said:

When all is said and done, the rapt saint is found the only logician. Not adulation, not argument becomes our lips, but paeons of joy and praise.<sup>29</sup>

Emerson termed himself a "professor of Joyous Science."

The glowing exultation of the illuminative periods Emerson discovered came less frequently as he grew older. "The grief of old age is," he noted when he was sixty-one, "that, now, only in rare moments, and by the happiest combinations or consent of the elements, can we attain those enlargements and that intellectual *élan*, which were once a daily gift."<sup>30</sup>

Like all mystics, Emerson recognized that the most fertile soil for revelation was a cultivated passivity and receptivity, "a glad and conspiring reception."<sup>31</sup> And while the experiences which resulted were transient, they were nevertheless clothed in an authority "which constrains us to ascribe more reality to them than to all other experiences." For these, he added, the "sublime part of life . . . all the rest are given."<sup>32</sup>

Two poetic statements of the illuminative experience by near contemporaries of Emerson will show how alike mystical descriptions may be in the aura of joyousness, certainty, and knowledge which they seem to imply. The first is a further statement from Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey," and like the "eye-ball" experience of Emerson is one induced by the beauty of natural surroundings.

Nor less, I trust,  
To them (the forms of nature) I may have owed another gift,  
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,  
In which the affections gently lead us on—  
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame  
And even the motion of our human blood  
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep  
In body, and become a living soul:

<sup>28</sup> *Journals*, IX, 63.

<sup>29</sup> *Works*, I, 194-95.

<sup>30</sup> *Journals*, X, 47.

<sup>31</sup> *Works*, I, 194.

<sup>32</sup> *Journals*, III, 74.

While with an eye made quiet by the power  
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,  
We see into the life of things.

And I have felt  
A presence that disturbs me with the joy  
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime  
Of something far more deeply interfused,  
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean and the living air,  
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;  
A motion and a spirit, that impels  
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,  
And rolls through all things.

Likewise induced by natural beauty is this familiar passage from  
"Song of Myself" by the American romanticist Walt Whitman:

Swiftly arise and spread round me the peace and knowledge  
that pass all the argument of the earth,  
And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own,  
And I know that the spirit of God is brother of my own,  
And that all the men ever born are also my brothers  
and the women my sisters and lovers,  
And that a kelson of the creation is love. . . .

#### "ENRAPTURED YANKEE—LAY PREACHER"

While Emerson was enraptured, he was also a Yankee; *Enraptured Yankee* he has been well labeled by a biographer. He was not interested in rapture or ecstasy as an end, or even as part of a technique; he was concerned with the insights and the revelations to be had. His is a New England mysticism, simple and pragmatic. As in the case of most important Occidental mystics, he was not a recluse. His mysticism was in no sense life-suppressing but life-enhancing. Thus a characteristic late work is his *Society and Solitude*. This book suggests the twin responsibilities Emerson felt. One was to protect his periods of solitude and meditation. The other was to maintain a laboring relationship with society. One went into solitude at least partly to return to society refreshed, strengthened, and inspired for real work. Professor Oscar Firkins' evaluation of Emerson's ability himself so to balance society and solitude is well stated:

Many people would admit that Emerson was the sanest of mystics because he was the soundest of thinkers, but does it occur to anyone that possibly he was the first of thinkers because he was the first of mystics? <sup>88</sup>

<sup>88</sup> Firkins, O. W., *Selected Essays*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1933, p. 83.



"Life," said Emerson, "is our dictionary." Man must think and meditate, but he must also act. Action may be subordinate for the scholar, but it is essential.

Again the true mystic never stops with illumination and ecstasy. There is a consideration beyond this with which he is vitally concerned. This is the matter of communication. What the mystic has learned, the insights he has achieved, he values so highly that he feels constrained to pass them on to others. Emerson expressed it beautifully:

It is very certain that it is the effect of conversation with the beauty of the soul, to beget a desire and need to impart to others the same knowledge and love. If utterance is denied, the thought lies like a burden on the man. Always the seer is a savor. Somehow his dream is told; somehow he publishes it with solemn joy; sometimes with pencil on canvas, sometimes with chisel on stone, sometimes in towers and aisles of granite, his soul's worship is builded; sometimes in anthems of indefinite music; but clearest and most permanent, in words.<sup>84</sup>

Thus he becomes a preacher or a missionary. This is the explanation of Emerson's literary productions. They are basically attempts to transmit his own observations of the religious life. Although he left the pulpit formally, he never ceased to be a preacher. His pulpit was the essay and the poem as well as the lyceum platform. He early learned that he could express opinions on weekdays which were not tolerated on Sundays. As a lay preacher himself he was deeply concerned with the ministry and with the preaching function. Some of his noblest utterances honor the true minister. On the other hand his sharp eye for insincere or foolish preaching is shown again and again by private notes in his *Journals*, some sharply satirical, some humorous, some hopelessly pessimistic. Positive statements on the ministry appear also in his wonderful "Divinity School Address," given at the Harvard Divinity School, in "The Preacher," and indirectly in "The American Scholar."

His first charge to the ministry was, characteristically, to preach from firsthand, personal experience of God. To the young ministerial candidates at Harvard he said:

To this holy office you propose to devote yourselves I wish you may feel your call in throbs of desire and hope. The office is the first in the world. It is of that reality that it cannot suffer the deduction of any falsehood. And it is my duty to say to you that need was never greater of new revelation than now.<sup>85</sup>

This demand implied not exactly a suspicion of the book but a wariness

<sup>84</sup> *Works*, I, 135.

<sup>85</sup> *Works*, I, 135.

in its use, else the minister might attempt to pass on what is at best secondhand. This, thought Emerson, resulted in mere babbling.

. . . only he can give, who has; he only can create, who is. The man on whom the soul descends, through whom the soul speaks, alone can teach—. But the man who aims to speak as books enable, . . . as synods use, as the fashion guides, and as interest commands, babbles. Let him hush.<sup>36</sup>

Lack of sincerity Emerson criticized most harshly. The tone of this note illustrates how sharp this criticism became:

The clergy are as like as peas. I cannot tell them apart. It was said: They have bronchitis because they read from their papers sermons with a near voice, and then, looking at the congregation, they try to speak with their far voice, and the shock is noxious. I think they do this, or the converse of this, with their thought. They look into Plato, or into the mind, and then try to make mince-meat of the amplitudes and eternities. It is the old story again: Once we had wooden chalices and golden priests; now we have golden chalices and wooden priests.<sup>37</sup>

In the *Journals* he wrote:

It is ridiculous to quote solemnly what the young W. said in his sermon as decisive of his faith in this or that. These young preachers are but chipping birds, who chirp now on the bushes, now on the ground, but do not mean anything by their chirping.<sup>38</sup>

And again: "The young preacher preached from his ears and his memory, and never a word from his soul."<sup>39</sup> Emerson asked for sermons concerned with the realities of life, sermons from a man who had himself lived through sorrow, suffering, and doubt. "The true preacher is known by this, that he deals out to people his life—life passed through the fire of thought."<sup>40</sup> "The people want some one who has been where they are now."<sup>41</sup> Emerson loved sincere, vital preaching, admiring particularly that of his uncle, Sam Ripley, and of his friend, Father Taylor, of whom he said:

He is a living man and explains at once what Whitfield and Fox and Father Moody were to their audiences, by the total infusion of his own soul into his assembly, and consequent absolute dominion over them. . . . He shows us what a man can do.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>36</sup> *Works*, I, 135.

<sup>37</sup> *Works*, X, 229.

<sup>38</sup> *Journals*, VI, 266.

<sup>39</sup> *Journals*, IV, 300.

<sup>40</sup> *Works*, X, 216.

<sup>41</sup> *Journals*, X, 18. Quoted from Alcott.

<sup>42</sup> *Journals*, III, 432.

On the other hand, stupid preaching brought forth the most caustic criticism:

This afternoon the foolishhest preaching—which bayed at the moon. Go, hush, old man, whom years have taught no truth.<sup>43</sup>

Humorous side lights on certain preachers of his day and on the ministry appear frequently in the *Journals*, but almost never in the *Essays*. He remarks, for example, that

Edward Palmer asked me if I liked two services in a Sabbath. I told him, Not very well. If the sermon was good I wished to think of it; if it was bad, one was enough.<sup>44</sup>

Again,

Dr. Ripley prays for rain with great explicitness on Sunday, and on Monday the showers fell. When I spoke of the speed with which his prayers were answered, the good man looked modest.<sup>45</sup>

The fallacy of the popular assumption that the mystic is a dreamer unqualified to deal successfully with everyday life is strongly refuted by Emerson's work and personality. Among the most acute critics of his own day, he wrote at the same time criticism of America which is permanently relevant. He was not a reformer in the popular sense, but he was a progressive in every sense.

His character was the best commentary upon his mysticism, for he was one of the most beloved of men, and one of the most satisfying characters of American history. He combined in a unique way the qualities of the saint and of the shrewd man of the world. Truly an enraptured Yankee, he was one of the greatest of Americans. "Judged by his life Emerson comes very near our best ideal of humanity,"<sup>46</sup> wrote Holmes. Lowell went still farther:

What, then, is his secret? Is it not that he out-Yankees us all? That he is equally at home with the potato-disease and original sin, with pegging shoes and the Over-Soul? That, as we try all trades, so has he tried all cultures? And above all, that his mysticism gives us a counterpoise to our super-practicality?<sup>47</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *Journals*, IV, 480.

<sup>44</sup> *Journals*, V, 98.

<sup>45</sup> *Journals*, V, 18.

<sup>46</sup> Holmes, Oliver W., *Ralph Waldo Emerson*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin Co., pp. 420-21.

<sup>47</sup> Lowell, James R., *My Study Windows*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1899, pp. 376.

# Christianity in India

NORMAN GOODALL

*The perennial problems of Christianity in India authoritatively analyzed—the author finds that consecrated personality is the key to their solution.*

## I

ONE OF MY most vivid recollections of the Christian scene in India is focused in the picture of a modest Indian pastor. He is a man of considerable natural gifts—a good presence, a taste and capacity for dignified public speech, a native resourcefulness and humor which carry him successfully through many a difficult situation, and powers of endurance enabling him to tramp from one to another of nine scattered villages for which he carries pastoral oversight. He is well educated—a B.D. of Bangalore United Theological College—and he bears the marks of an authentic vocation to the Christian ministry. To all his work he brings a great devotion and an immense capacity for caring. This work lies amidst the poverty of one of the poorest sections of village India. The area has for years been scheduled as a famine area—meaning that it is the exception rather than the rule for its inhabitants to be able to subsist for more than a year or two at a time without specially organized relief being provided for them. One of the most moving acts of worship in which I have been privileged to engage was conducted by this pastor. It was at the close of a weekday when a large gathering of village folk assembled at the Hindu temple for Christian prayers. It was their daily practice. They had no church building for Christian worship but the temple was otherwise disused. Or, rather, it was almost disused. I was told that occasionally a solitary Hindu worshiper living four miles away would come to do his lonely *puja* there. Apart from this it had become the spiritual rendezvous of the group of Christian believers and enquirers. At the heart of them was a very small company of convinced and baptized disciples. The rest were seekers, in various stages of ignorance or enlightenment. All alike—baptized and unbaptized—looked to the Indian pastor as their Christian *guru*.

It is worth keeping in mind a personal picture of this kind while considering such a theme as "Christianity in India." Many of our gen-

eralizations on the subject, whether touching achievements, problems, trends or prospects, take insufficient note of the anonymous Christian pastor or church member in whom the largest issues are translated into life and who is finally the key to the whole story. The man I have just described will for the most part remain anonymous through the rest of Christian history. Little is known of him outside his cluster of villages and his story is not likely to be written. Yet he gathers into himself a great part of the Christian history of India and its prospects for coming days. Behind him there lies the pioneer service and sacrifice of missionaries and the faith and generosity of a "sending" church. There stands the witness of an earlier Indian generation to which he owes his immediate Christian inheritance. There is the contribution of a Christian village school to his boyhood, of a high school and theological college to his subsequent training—all part of a long story of Christian educational service, much of it the outcome of co-operative, interdenominational activity. There is the larger church grouping of which his network of village congregations is a part: in this instance it is the South India United Church whose actions, incidentally, affect the prospects for church union far beyond India. There are the ties which still link the fulfilment of this man's vocation with the missionary societies and churches of the West. And for him the many question-marks that belong to the coming years of crisis and change in India are of very personal significance. Further, the Christian response and contribution to the changing India of these next years will be determined more by what a man of this sort thinks and feels and does than by anything else.

The strength of the Christian movement in India lies in the fact that this anonymous pastor is but one of many such. Its weaknesses are there largely because there are not enough of his kind. The total Christian community numbers about seven and three-quarter millions, of whom just over half are Roman Catholics. There is general agreement that the adequate nurture of the Protestant community requires one ordained pastor for not more than every thousand Christians. His training should have approximated—if not to the B.D. standard of my illustration—at least to that of the Licentiate of Theology. One for every thousand would mean, at the present time, about four thousand of such men. But there are in fact only 2,400 ordained ministers in the non-Roman churches and many of these have far less equipment for their work than is called for by the standard just indicated. And not all possess either the

natural gifts or the spiritual powers of the example I have quoted. At the most crucial point, therefore, the Christian Church in India is dangerously weak, and when it is remembered that the whole Christian community—Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Syrian—still numbers little more than two per cent of the population, the frailty of the organized Christian movement in relation to its non-Christian environment becomes still more apparent. Yet this is one of the points at which the significance of the personal factors in the situation should not be underestimated. However vast the tasks yet to be accomplished by the Christian movement in India, it is no small matter that hundreds of pastors of the stature of my illustration are to be found in this land. They are further accompanied by a far larger contingent of unordained workers—catechists and teachers, men and women. All these together comprise the ministry of churches within whose membership there are tens of thousands of men and women bearing authentic witness to Christ and irrevocably committed to his obedience and service. And these churches are the most distinctive part of that total Christian movement which sustains a vast range of educational, medical, and other community services, declaring to all who will hear that the key to its manifold activities is to be found in the Name that is above every name. Knowing a little of what has yet to be achieved by the Christian forces in India, I cannot be complacent or without concern. But recollecting my friend the Indian pastor and all that he symbolizes, I do not tremble for the ark.

## II

It is natural at the moment to speculate about the consequences for the Christian movement of impending political changes in India. Will the pastor and his flock be any less free than at present to maintain their witness and will they find themselves speaking to an India that is less or more receptive to the Christian message? It is doubtful if an answer to this question can be based on those limited applications of political self-government which the church has already experienced in various parts of the country. During the brief period of provincial autonomy following the 1937 elections there were local episodes that gave rise to anxiety concerning the status of Christian minorities under governments whose members were predominantly Hindu. More recently certain native States have issued regulations governing change of religious allegiance which, to say the least, are likely to result in none but the most con-



vinced and determined convert claiming this conditioned freedom. In States and Provinces alike, government control of education is rapidly extending along lines that will deprive Christian institutions of many advantages that they have hitherto turned to good account, and this process is likely to be accelerated rather than retarded under more complete self-government. It would, however, be a mistake to conclude from all this that the kind of freedom most vital to the Christian enterprise will be absent from the India of tomorrow. If pre-election assurances count for anything, the Indian National Congress is fully committed to the preservation of civil and religious liberties in terms which, constitutionally, will leave Christians as unhampered as they are today in the pursuit of their mission. The official manifesto of the Congress Working Committee promises constitutional guarantees of "the fundamental rights and civil liberties of all citizens," with "the freedom of each group within the nation to develop its own life and culture." When Mr. Rajagopalachari was publicly asked, "Will a National Government put handicaps upon the preaching of Christianity and the conversion of the people?" he replied: "Everybody will be free to preach his faith fairly and properly. . . . This is not a promise I have forged in order to get your political alliance."

Constitutional guarantees alone do not result in the freedoms that they may affirm, and it is fairly certain that strong social pressures will continue to modify the letter of the law. But this—if it occurs—will be the continuance of a problem with which Christianity has always had to contend in India, and it will not necessarily be a greater difficulty in the future. There is at least the possibility that in some respects this situation will be eased a little when there is less ground than at present for associating the Christian movement with the British *raj*. How far missionaries from the West—especially from Britain—will be acceptable in the new India, it is not easy to say. The National Christian Council has affirmed very definitely its "earnest desire" that partnership between the churches in the East and the West shall "continue to find expression in the sending out of missionaries by the churches of the West." This sentiment is in accord with the kind of personal relationships that have continued to exist between missionaries and their Indian colleagues even through the political tensions of recent years. If the final transfer of political power is accomplished with good will there is little reason to expect anything but a continuation of this confident partnership; but if

the present delicately poised situation is unbalanced by violence there may well follow a period in which the Indian Church will be more embarrassed than helped by the presence of Western colleagues. In such an event it may also follow that the indigenous church will find itself hard pressed until it can re-establish itself in public confidence. These are contingencies that need to be reckoned with soberly in a situation as complex as the present one; yet the reasons already given encourage confidence in the better of these alternative courses being pursued.

There is no doubt greater reason for concern as to the place of Christianity within an India more influenced by Islam than Hinduism, whether this be within a separated *Pakistan* or under a federation in which the Muslim attitude to conversion is operative. Nevertheless this difficulty, also, is old rather than new. It is by no means confined to India and it is part of a problem that goes deeper than politics—the implacable resistance of Islam to the spiritual pressure of Christianity. When the Christian Church—in India as elsewhere—finds the key to this door a good many stubborn but secondary difficulties will also find their solution.

In regard to the whole question of Christian freedom in India one of the most hopeful signs is the clarity with which the issue is seen within the Christian movement itself and the temper in which it is being handled. A notable illustration of this can be found in pronouncements made in recent years by the National Christian Council of India. In January, 1944, at a gathering where Indian leadership in discussion was more decisive than at any previous meeting in the history of the Council, there was produced a lengthy statement on *Church and State in Postwar India* which deserves to become a classic point of reference on the subject. It is an admirable exposition of fundamental principles governing the nature of Church and State and their mutual relations and responsibilities. Religious liberty as conceived by Christians is defined in terms that make it relevant to the whole religious situation in India with its peculiar intensification of the communal problem. In giving guidance to churches and church members and in setting forth what the Christian conscience would expect of the State in a self-governing India, it states the Christian position in language that is as persuasive as it is firm. In the same document, and also in a further statement issued by the National Christian Council in 1945, the particular question of freedom in Christian education with reference to current controversies on "proselyt-

izing" is handled with similar dignity and clarity. Ability to state a case in principle is not all that the situation requires, but when leadership of this quality is forthcoming within the indigenous Christian community itself there is reason for considerable assurance regarding the working out of the whole matter in coming years.

### III

Important as is this business of the civil and political freedom within which the work of the church may be pursued in India, there is another question which in the long run is even more vital. It concerns the deeper attitudes and responses of Indian life and thought to the basic challenges and appeals of the Christian revelation. Will the prevailing climate of the new, self-governing India be more conducive, or less, to a real hearing of the Word? Will a church that is politically free to proclaim its evangel discover that it has to break through deeper resistances than can be imposed by any government? Only time and events can truly answer a question of this kind, and profitable speculation concerning it must be based on more knowledge than I possess. I venture, however, to give expression to a misgiving which I know to be shared by others.

Christianity has always been confronted in India by massive forces of resistance. They have been met on varying levels of life and thought but have ultimately derived their strength from a religious source—from one or another of the highly developed non-Christian religions, principally Hinduism or Islam, which have been rooted in India for centuries. It has never been possible to treat this power of resistance lightly and experience has given no ground for expecting easy victories. Although India has been the scene of remarkable mass movements which have often been publicized in a manner suggesting phenomenally rapid success, the real story has not in fact been a tale of "quick returns." Behind almost every mass movement there can be traced a lengthy history whose opening chapters have involved the heroism of pioneers, long years of patient and apparently unrewarded toil and, more often than not, the solitary witness and sacrifice of early converts around whose fidelity there eventually gathered the group or "mass" of enquirers. Further, all who have shared in the excitement of the later movement when large numbers have put themselves in the way of Christian instruction, know that the task of consolidating such a movement and

leading its participants into some degree of Christian maturity is far from being a facile operation. Francis Thompson's words apply to an India of mass movements no less than to other fields:

There is no expeditious road  
To pack and label men for God  
And save them by the barrel-load.

Yet this sober recognition of formidable difficulties has hitherto had at the heart of it a quiet confidence related to the very nature of the greatest obstacles, namely, their religious origin. Mighty barriers confronted the bearers of the Christian evangel, yet at the other side of them lay India's immense capacity for worship, its peculiar experience of "sainthood," its apprehension of spiritual values, and certain ideals of simplicity and asceticism to which the gospel would surely prove congenial. The barriers might remain for many long years but when at last they fell there could be little doubt about the nature of the Christian victory. It would be seen that deep had spoken to deep. An India that is essentially religious would have found its Saviour.

It is in this respect that the climate of the new India seems to many to present a profound contrast to all that has been experienced hitherto. There seems no doubt that a vast change has for long been taking place in the religious temper and conviction of non-Christian India. A spiritual sensitivity which could once be presupposed can no longer be taken for granted. There is a new and negative attitude to religion and religions, which is more formidable for the Christian evangelist or apologist than a positive loyalty to an alternative religious system or an ignorant clinging to superstitions. This, of course, is not an Indian phenomenon only. It is part of a world-wide mood, but as it finds expression in India it appears—as in other parts of the Orient—the more dangerous because of the magnitude of the revolution which it betokens.

This temper is familiarly summed up in the word "secularism," but in its common use the term scarcely discloses the deep springs of emotion and aspiration that belong to it. A major ingredient in the mood is, of course, nationalist fervor, coupled with a social idealism that goes with much of the political zeal. This is secular in the sense that it excludes all other-worldly considerations, is skeptical of reliance on spiritual forces and emphasizes "rights" often to the eclipse of "duties." Yet in its conviction that along this road is to be found man's fulfilment and in

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its power over the "believing" faculties of multitudes, it is touching the springs to which the great religions, Christianity included, have hitherto made their deepest appeal. The gravity of the new situation lies in the assumption that what has hitherto been understood by religion is irrelevant both to these deeper impulses and to the national or social idealisms that are winning men's allegiance. Except for the few who have learned differently from a rich Christian experience, this assumption is held to be applicable to Christianity no less than to other religions. The great question for the future is whether, without foreshortening the gospel's eternal perspectives or presenting Christianity as other than a Cross-centered religion of the Spirit, it can be proclaimed in such a manner that men will see in it both the fulfilment and the corrective of their present aspirations.

This calls for a new apologetic, and in the nature of the case its most convincing presentation must come from Christian Indians more than from missionaries of any other nationality. It is here that at present Christianity in India lacks an advantage that it possessed a generation or so ago when the nature of the conflict was so different. We have spoken of an earlier resistance which, though formidable, was avowedly a religious opposition to another faith. When Christian confidence was at its greatest in relation to the outcome of this issue, the Christian movement in India was strong in a theological leadership that could speak to the theological opposition of the non-Christian religions in their own terms. Indian religious thought was being challenged and excited by a Christian scholarship which knew the territory of its opponent and which could contend, with reasoned conviction, that it was coming not to destroy but to fulfil. Today, with the shifting of the battleground, Christian leadership in India scarcely possesses a comparable advantage. In this respect India is by no means the only part of Christendom that is weak where the conflict is sharpest. But the need there is very patent, and as yet there is all too little sign of it being supplied from within the intellectual and spiritual resources of the indigenous Christian community.

#### IV

The need to which expression has just been given is real and urgent. It would, however, be a mistake to assume that an apologetic determined mainly by the social and political idealisms within the prevailing mood is the most that is called for. Even in the more confident era to which



we have referred, when Christian apologists in India appear to have been better equipped for the contemporary struggle, the final victory was withheld. Theological bridgeheads, so to speak, were thrown into the opponent's territory but the land was never yielded. A lively optimism concerning the outcome of the struggle which was much in evidence at the turn of the century was falsified by events. The real resistance was at a level that the finest apologetic can never touch. Within the "spirituality" of non-Christian India there remained a final resistance to the Spirit of Christ and to the absolute claims of the one and only incarnate Lord.

This ultimate power of resistance is always deeper than any of its most obvious contemporary expressions. When we have read into the world-wide secularism of today the most that can be affirmed concerning the religious significance of some of its manifestations, the fact remains that the mood includes a radical unwillingness to come to terms with the highest demands with which God confronts us in Christ. It betrays a lack of desire for the eternal life which he offers us in his Son. We may speak of this with much understanding of factors that have contributed to it or aggravated it—social injustices in this world, personal frustration and misfortunes, ignorance, lack of opportunity, and so on. We may further speak of it confessingly, as knowing it too well in our own hearts, rather than self-righteously, as though we were free to censure. But the fact remains in its humiliating starkness that with whatever plausibilities we defend our secular mood, it is but another manifestation of our need of salvation and our unwillingness to be saved.

That this condemnation belongs to a wider field than India does not make it less serious in its particular application to the prevailing temper within that great land. And the contrast between this mood and the earlier attitude to which I have referred—that of an India which, though withholding surrender to the absolute claims of Christ, yet showed itself possessed of spiritual insights which could so easily have led to him—deepens the tragic sense of it all. What can speak to such a situation in Spirit and in power?

## V

I come back to the illustration with which I began. As the key, under God, to the meeting of this need, I see an anonymous pastor, trudging around his group of villages and embodying in himself a serv-

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ing leadership of a quality which no other religion in India has ever created and which cannot be contributed out of the most ardent or even sacrificial features of any secular idealism. Here is a demonstration of the pastoral spirit with its immeasurable capacity for caring, a life identified with human need and suffering where these things are most acute. Here is the voice of prophecy, liberating aspiration whether personal or social yet applying to it the discipline and transformation of the Cross. Here is a prophet who is also a priest, speaking to the instinct for worship because he is himself a worshiper—a Christian *guru* who combines practical serviceableness with unmistakable specialization in the life of the spirit. Such a ministry needs all the reinforcements of the kind that I have illustrated in my reference to a new apologetic. Although its most characteristic environment will remain a village setting, in an India whose economy will always be predominantly rural, this ministry must discover its new application within an industrial era as well as in a period of acute political self-consciousness. The implications of all this in the training and equipment of such a ministry constitute one of the biggest tasks before the Christian Church in any part of the world. It is here that the churches of the West need be in no doubt about the objective to which their share in the common partnership should be chiefly directed. But while the largeness of the task is soberly recognized and its complex details are grappled with, it is salutary to recall the fundamental simplicity of India's greatest Christian need. At the last it will be through as local and personal an agency as the anonymous village pastor that the miracle will be accomplished and that Christ, being lifted up, will draw all India to him.

# The Book That Is Alive

JOHN PATERSON

*A Hebraist's stimulating study of the living Word—the vitality of language to an Oriental—even moral and metaphysical truths are expressed in concrete terms.*

A MODERN poet has told how the doer of a heroic deed could not recount it to his fellow tribesmen for lack of words. Thereupon there arose a man "afflicted with the magic of necessary words," and he described the deed in such moving terms that the words "became alive and walked up and down in the hearts of his hearers." Then they arose and put the inspired man to death. And the poet makes this comment on the story:

A bare half-hundred words, breathed upon by some man in his exaltation or his agony . . . generations ago, can open to us the doors of three worlds, or stir us so intolerably that we can scarce abide to look at our own souls. It is a miracle—one that happens very seldom.<sup>1</sup>

We do not usually think of the Bible as the book that is alive. The somber form of its binding tends to convey the opposite impression, and one who seeks to show its vitality and quickening power labors under the disadvantage of a deep-rooted prejudice. Nevertheless, we undertake this very task in the firm belief that it can be demonstrated to reason and also be made perceptible to feeling and emotion. So often we fail to see the wood for the trees, and even the trees may not be too distinct to our vision. But it is desirable that the preacher and the teacher should first get a comprehensive view, and, like Moses on Pisgah, "see all the land." We can return later to survey the individual features.

In this approach one general premise may be made. We are dealing here with an ancient literature whose methods of thought and expression differ greatly from our own. That is true particularly in the case of the Old Testament and it holds good, though in lesser degree, of the New Testament. We are so accustomed to our own thought processes, largely derived from Greek sources, that we forget that here we are dealing with a literature which knew nothing of such processes;

<sup>1</sup> Cited from James Alex. Robertson, *The Gospel and Epistles of St. John*, T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1919, pp. 92f.

and we make the book say what we think it should say, and fail to hear what it really does say. We stretch its ancient form on our Procrustean molds until its beauty is marred and its vitality impaired or destroyed, and finally we see no beauty in it that we should desire it. Like Israel itself—to use the prophet's simile—it once was a noble vine but we have stripped it of its nobility and its glory has departed. It has become a barren, withered thing. To recapture that nobility and show forth its native beauty is the purpose we have in view.

### I. VITALITY OF THE WORD

To perceive and understand the vitality of Scripture, especially the Old Testament and the New Testament Gospels, we may well begin with the matter of the spoken word. Vitality adhered to the spoken word in Hebrew in a way we can hardly understand. To the Hebrew a word was not merely a vocable dropped from unthinking lips; *it was a unit of energy charged with power*. We might think of it as a verbal electron. It is impregnated with force and flies like a bullet to its billet. It is full of power for weal or woe. Words fall from our lips so easily and so idly. But the Hebrew was economical of words, and there was a marked austerity about his utterance. The Hebrew language had only 10,000 words while Greek had 200,000. A word to the Hebrew was something to be thought about, and it is highly significant that in Hebrew the word for "thought" and "speech" is the same (*'amar*). Hebrew speech is just thinking aloud—but it is thinking. The characteristic prayer of the Old Testament is

Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth,  
Keep the door of my lips.<sup>2</sup>

The Hebrew knew there was power in words, and that power may not be used indiscriminately. Words "run" and have "free course" toward a goal. There may be something quite primitive and naïve in all this, but the same idea still prevails in the East. It may be seen today in that region; when a curse is uttered the bystanders will throw themselves to the ground so that those words, like high explosives, may pass over their heads and do them no hurt. Sir George Adam Smith tells us how once as he journeyed in the desert a group of Moslems failed to discern him in his party and gave the customary greeting, "Peace be with you." When they learned that the greeting had thus

<sup>2</sup> Psalms 141:3.

been extended to an *infidel*—for the Christian is such to the Moslem—they returned to recall the greeting and take it back. A beneficent force had been released where it should not be released, and its beneficent energy must be arrested, if possible. We get something of this thought in the verse:

Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds;  
 You can't do that way when you're flying words:  
 "Careful with fire" is good advice, we know,  
 "Careful with words" is ten times doubly so.  
 Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes fall back dead  
 But God himself can't kill them when they're said.<sup>3</sup>

The Hebrew idea went further than that. Words were dynamic and had inherent energy; they realized themselves. Neither Isaac nor Esau could recall the blessing given to Jacob, and for all their hot, passionate tears the thing was done beyond recall (Gen. 27). When the high priest spoke the Levitical blessing,

The Lord bless thee and keep thee:  
 The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be  
 gracious unto thee:  
 The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give  
 thee peace<sup>4</sup>

the people not only heard words, they received to themselves a vital force that traveled with the words from the *nephesh* (soul) of the high priest to their souls. The blessing was fraught with vitality.

Nor is this at all fanciful, though it be far removed from our way of thinking. One has only to consider the curse and see how it worked. Take the case of Balak, who hired Balaam to curse Israel (Num. 22): Balak knew how things worked. Balak knew that in hiring Balaam he had acquired the most potent weapon for his campaign against the children of Israel. Anything after Balaam's curse could only be in the nature of "mopping up." The curse was the thing!

Come now, therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people: for they are too mighty for me; peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land; for I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed.<sup>5</sup>

It would be no inexactitude to say that this was the way in which most of these ancient wars were won and lost. A good curser was worth more than an army corps. These were battles of words in an unusual

<sup>3</sup> Author unknown.

<sup>4</sup> Numbers 6:24-26.

<sup>5</sup> Numbers 22:6.

sense. Ahab and Jehoshaphat, for all their embattled might, could only fail when the word had gone forth from the mouth of Micaiah ben Yimla:

And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills as sheep that have no shepherd: and the Lord said, these have no master; let every man return to his house in peace.<sup>6</sup>

That word *runs* and none can arrest its progress; there must be great caution in the release of such a force. Shimei's curse, too, will run its course and David knows there is nothing he can do about it.<sup>7</sup> Like the spot on the hand of Lady Macbeth it cannot be washed out. Not a word falls to the ground; it will not return void. Thus the divine word is "as a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces";<sup>8</sup> there is in it irresistible energy and it is fearfully alive.

## II. VITALITY OF SEMITIC SPEECH

The Hebrew language differs greatly from our speech. It abounds in deep guttural sounds which we can hardly frame to express. In a peculiar sense we may say Hebrew is essentially a language of the heart. The Northern speeches, says Herder,<sup>9</sup>

imitate the sounds of Nature, but this they do roughly, and, as it were, only from without. They creak, rustle, hiss and jar like the objects themselves . . . but the further south we go the more delicate becomes the imitation of Nature. The words have passed through the firmer medium of emotion, and are framed, as it were, in the region of the heart. They yield us, therefore, not coarse reproductions of sound, but images on which feeling has impressed its softer seal, thus modifying them from within. Of this tone-blending of inward feeling and outward representation in the roots of verbs the Oriental languages are a model. . . .

We in the northern latitudes are accustomed to speaking with our teeth; that is, we sound the vocables against our dental equipment and force the sound outward. But southern Europeans, e.g. the Italian people, do not speak so but rather with the *ore rotundo* (rounded mouth) and have a much fuller utterance and much more animation in expression. But when we pass to the Orient and the Eastern Mediterranean we find a speech that is not from the teeth nor with the *ore rotundo*; it is a speech deep-set in the chest supported by all the force of the visceral and abdominal muscles. It is a speech with all the lifeblood of the

<sup>6</sup> I Kings 22:17.

<sup>7</sup> II Samuel 16:10ff.

<sup>8</sup> Jeremiah 23:29.

<sup>9</sup> Herder, *Geist der hebräischen Poesie*, Vol. II, pp. 13ff.

heart behind it, and it is full of passion. It is removed, *toto caelo*, from Greek moderation or Latin deliberation. Here is a language of passion and action. The verb in a Hebrew sentence normally comes first, for the Hebrew is interested primarily in action. "The language of which we speak is a very abyss of verbs, a sea of waves, where action ever rolls surging into action."<sup>10</sup> The Hebrew speech is characterized by extraordinary vitality and forcefulness.

### III. LIVELINESS OF THOUGHT

The same may be said of the vitality of thought among the Hebrews. Language and thought combine to give us the living word. For the Hebrew is always concrete and definite. There are no abstractions here. That is true of the Old Testament and it is true of the Gospels. For the mind of the Hebrew was intuitive; the speculative mind that gives rise to philosophy meets us only in the later period when the Hebrew genius has been crossed with the Greek and becomes "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought"; then we get a book like Ecclesiastes. But Ecclesiastes does not breathe the genuine Hebrew atmosphere. Normally the Hebrew saw only one thing at a time; and he did not see things in relation. So it is with Jesus; he sees the scarlet anemones, he sees the fisherman's boat, and he sees the birds circling above the sower scattering broadcast from his bosom. The thought here is *optical rather than logical*, and of this more anon. Thus we have a philosophy from Socrates, but from Jesus we have words of life. And those words are never gathered into an organized system or strung together to make a philosophy; they lie like gems unstrung in a casket and sparkle as separate jewels. For the Hebrew knew it was impossible to "cordialize with an *ens rationis*" (rational entity) and he never made the attempt. He keeps his feet on the ground and grips reality; he gets down to "brass tacks" and talks real things. The word is always made flesh and he who runs may read: ideas get "a local habitation and a name," and become real before our eyes. Ideas are poor ghosts, says George Eliot,<sup>11</sup>

our sun-filled eyes cannot discern them; they pass athwart us in their vapor, and cannot make themselves felt. But sometimes they are made flesh: they breathe upon us with warm breath, they touch us with soft responsive hands, they look

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup> Eliot, George, *Scenes from Clerical Life*.



at us with sad sincere eyes, and speak to us with appealing tones; they are clothed in a living human soul with all its conflicts, its faith and its love. Then their presence is a power, then they shake us like a passion, and we are drawn after them with a gentle compulsion as flame is drawn to flame.

In all noble literature it is so; the word is made flesh, and comes home to the bosoms and business of men. That is the real reason why the Bible finds us, and will continue to find us, in the deepest parts of our being. "Deep calleth unto deep."

We may attain this standard at times, but it is normal with the Hebrew. Their words smack of the soil. They reflect sensation with a strange directness. To the Hebrew *anger* is "the fire that burns," *desire* is "the thirst that cannot be quenched," *pride* is "the lofty look," and *obstinacy* is "stiffness of neck." *Courage* is expressed by "girding the loins" or "strengthening the feeble knees," while forgiveness is "the blotting out" of transgressions. *Joy* is expressed by dancing, *justice* is "the straight path" while *iniquity* is "the crooked way." Here men "think with the eye," and all comes in by the eye-gate.

Nor is it otherwise in the more spacious thoughts of life. We are accustomed to speak of the Problem of Suffering in the Old Testament, but the Bible does not know this. Here the word becomes quivering flesh and we behold a Job sitting on his ash-heap outside the city gate, or discern that wondrous form of the Suffering Servant whose beauty was marred beyond recognition (Isa. 53). That is concrete and living. Again, we speak of temptation, but the Bible takes us down to Potiphar's house and shows us Joseph keeping his eyes on God while he holds onto character and says, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?"<sup>12</sup> That is a living slice of life, a transcript of experience. The Bible takes us to Babylon and shows us what fidelity means. It shows us a vast multitude bending in adoration of a great image set up by the king on the plain of Dura. At the blare of the trumpets and sound of the drums all prostrate themselves before the image—all, save one who stands with back erect and faces toward Jerusalem. Daniel is the ideal Jew, and the writer here made the ideal real. He knew that times would come again when it would be hard for a Jew to maintain the faith of his fathers and the pieties of his youth, and he bodied forth the ideal in the form of this young man. And both Jew and Christian know what they mean when they say:

<sup>12</sup> Genesis 39:9.

Dare to be a Daniel,  
 Dare to stand alone,  
 Dare to have a purpose firm,  
 Dare to make it known.

We speak of fidelity, but the Jew was concrete and definite and he told the story of Daniel.

#### IV. VITALITY OF MORAL INSIGHTS

We may pride ourselves as we will on our modern educational advances and our psychological techniques, but has any teacher of religion ever given us an analysis of temptation equal to that contained in the third chapter of Genesis? Could there be anything more vital than this presentation? It could be easily set forth in diagrammatic form as the psychologists usually do. But there is no need, for all this comes through the eye-gate. There is the woman who might have been busily employed but was not; she was caught off guard. "Satan finds some mischief for idle hands to do." And Satan finds some evil for empty minds to think. "A man's task is his life preserver," said Emerson, though Emerson used that thought in a slightly different fashion. There, too, is the serpent, slimy, slithering, with all his sinuosity of coil insinuating himself into the garden, fascinating with his evil eye—where could we find a more apt picture of the insidiousness of temptation that worms its way into the citadel of Mansoul? Here we see temptation taking the form of a physical sensation, "good to eat," the form of an aesthetic delight, "good to look upon," and finally the form of an intellectual ambition, "to be desired to make one wise."<sup>18</sup> This gets us on all sides. It is all so vivid because it is so vital.

Thomas à Kempis tells us that the whole story of temptation can be put in four words. These, to quote his original Latin, are *Cogitatio*, *Imaginatio*, *Delectatio*, *Assensio*. The thought or *cogitation* may originate with ourselves, or it may be due to external suggestion. But we bring that thought into the center of the field of consciousness and form a picture or *image* of it. We keep looking at it and smack our lips as we gaze upon it; our mouth waters with *delectation* as it stands before our eyes. But this does not constitute the Fall; that comes when something inside us *assents* to the temptation, and the citadel of Mansoul is laid in ruins. Assuredly the writer who penned that story knew life

<sup>18</sup> MacFadyen, John E., *The Use of the Old Testament*, London, 1922, p. 30.

and the workings of the human heart; here is a slice from life and a transcript from experience.

So often we miss the message because we fail to think with the eye. The reporter gets the words, but it is the camera that gets the pictures. The apodeictic gestures are never caught by the reporter. When the psalmist says, "*There are the workers of iniquity fallen,*"<sup>14</sup> we have to think of him pointing the finger in triumphant joy. When Jesus spoke to the Syrophoenician woman, how did he look? There must have been a challenge in his look that led the woman to come back with that wonderful rejoinder: "Yea, Lord, but even the little dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table."<sup>15</sup> Surely Jesus must have smiled broadly as he responded with, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it done unto thee even as thou wilt." How did Jesus look when he was angered, or how did he look when the writer felt impelled to write, "Jesus beholding him loved him"<sup>16</sup>—or how did he look when "he began to be greatly amazed and sore troubled"?<sup>17</sup> Words only express so much and we must learn to think with the eye.

So often we miss what is meant because we fail here. Take the familiar 23d Psalm. Most commentators agree as to its beauty, but many commentators hold that its beauty is marred by the fact that it is not a literary unity. The opening scene is pastoral but at the fifth verse we suddenly change to an indoor banquet. But this is not so; when we think with the eye we see it is not so. The beautiful pastoral scene of the shepherd and his sheep remains to the end.

In the morning the shepherd comes to the fold and utters his peculiar cry, "Tu-whoo, tu-whoo," and the sheep follow him as he walks away. His sheep know his voice and follow him. Another shepherd comes and likewise gives his peculiar cry, "Tu-whit, tu-whit," and walks away while his sheep follow him. The shepherd knows where the green lush grass is, and when the sheep have fed he will lead them to couch at the watering-place; he knows the right—not righteous—paths that lead there and the sheep do not know, for they are silly sheep. So many paths lead nowhere or down to danger, where in the deep shadows lurk wild beasts or wilder men. And all this the shepherd does because he is a shepherd and wants to be known as such. He will not have men

<sup>14</sup> Psalms 36:12.

<sup>15</sup> Matthew 15:27-28.

<sup>16</sup> Mark 10:21.

<sup>17</sup> Mark 14:33.

point the finger of scorn and say he is a hireling who only serves for money. He is jealous of his good name, and he does all this "for his name's sake." The sun is so brilliant in the East and shadows are so deep and dangerous, for there lurk the lion and the bear or robber men. And so he carries a shepherd's crook or staff to draw the wandering sheep to himself, and he carries also a *rod* or club studded with iron nails to brain the wild beasts or those wilder men who wait in the shadow for the sheep. All that we understand. But note how the picture continues. As we look, or think with the eye, we see the shepherd's little black tent set in the desert, and one day across that desert comes fleeing a man pursued by the blood-avengers. He flees for his life, for "he who sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." There are but two laws in the desert, the law of blood revenge and the law of hospitality. And both have the strength of iron. If the fugitive can reach that tent, that little "house of hair," or even but touch the ropes of that tent, he is safe as the Bank of England or the Rock of Gibraltar—safer. The blood-avengers may not enter. They can stand without, lowering, glowering, and threatening, but they dare not touch him. The shepherd will give him all his richest provisions and anoint his head with oil and entertain him. He can sit there and look out on his pursuers that have tracked him across the desert. He is safe within that tent—safe for a time. For two days and the intervening night, as long "as the food is in his bowels," as the Arabs say. After that he must stand forth and bide his bloody assize. As the psalmist thought of that scene he continued to think and his thoughts continue in the last verse. And the word used there for "follow" is the Hebrew word used of the pursuing blood-avengers:

Goodness and mercy all my life shall surely follow me  
And in God's house for evermore my dwelling-place shall be.

Not for two days and the intervening night, not so is the hospitality of God. Thus we see how by thinking with the eye the beauty of this pearl and crown of the psalter is in no way marred. And if at times the commentaries tell us there is no connection between passages of Scripture, we should ask ourselves whether *the connection is not logical but optical*. The Hebrew thinks with the eye.

#### V. THE HEBREW IS CONCRETE AND DEFINITE

These illustrations we have adduced and elaborated thus far be-

cause it is difficult for us to get inside the skin of the Semite. The attempt has to be made if we would understand what he is saying. We are so used to abstractions that we hardly recognize that too often we are throwing dust in our own eyes and in the eyes of the people to whom we speak. We lose contact with reality. The present writer has heard a preacher begin his prayer with the words, "O thou who art our great hypothesis," which certainly could not be put into Hebrew—and prayers that cannot be turned into Hebrew should not be prayed. Look how the Hebrew spoke:

O Lord, my strength, my rock, my fortress, my buckler, my lofty tower.<sup>18</sup>

A child could understand that, but an adult might not understand the other phrase. We speak of Environment and Heredity and often we hardly know what we mean. But the Hebrew could express that very clearly beyond any misunderstanding:

The fathers have eaten sour grapes  
and the children's teeth are set on edge.<sup>19</sup>

There is an edge on that that will cut through the thickest understanding. The Bible knows "the world, the flesh, and the devil," and there is no reason why we should obscure these so definite realities with our high-sounding abstractions. We have seen a preacher advertised to preach on "the Immutability of Character," but the hearers would not guess readily what he was trying to say. The ancient Semite would have tugged his Semitic whiskers and pulled his beard and laughed at that, for he would put it so much better:

Can the Ethiopian change his skin  
Or the leopard his spots?<sup>20</sup>

Or could any phrase of ours express more adequately the dream that is in every decent man's heart:

They shall beat their swords to ploughshares  
And their spears to pruning-hooks.<sup>21</sup>

We pride ourselves on our ability to give expression to our thoughts. But we cannot equal the Hebrew in that respect. We call a spade an agricultural implement but the Hebrew called a spade a spade. That

<sup>18</sup> Psalms 18:1.

<sup>19</sup> Ezekiel 18:2.

<sup>20</sup> Jeremiah 13:23.

<sup>21</sup> Isaiah 2:4.

definiteness and concreteness can be seen in modern Jewish or Arabic proverbs. We say "Union is Strength," which may be clear enough, but it is not as clear as the Hebrew "Two dogs killed a lion"; that is thinking with the eye and it is clear thinking related to real life. "Familiarity breeds contempt" is thoroughly English and thoroughly abstract, but how eloquent is the Jewish rendering of the same thought: "The poor man hungers and knows it not." So long has the pauper been in company with his empty stomach that he is unconscious of its ache! Modern Arabic yields a most expressive word on heredity, even more expressive than the word quoted from Ezekiel:

If the father be onion, and the mother garlic,  
How can the child have a sweet perfume?

That is pungent and penetrating. The Arabic proverbs, like the Hebrew, are rooted in the soil and smack of mother earth. One of Dickens' characters—Uriah Heap—would have understood the following which commends humility:

Low-lying ground drinks its own rain and that of its neighbors.

There is insight in this one on the tongue: "The tongue is the dragoman (interpreter) of the heart." Nor is there anyone who will deny the forceful vigor of the truth expressed in "He who increases his flesh increases food for worms." These may lack polish, but they do not lack vitality. Compared to the Semitic proverbs the English maxims are

As moonlight unto sunlight  
And as water unto wine.

## VI. VISUALIZED EMOTION

To such a degree is this carried by the lively Hebrew that even emotion is made visible to the eye. We can never understand the pathos and tragedy of Cain until we *see* it as the Hebrew saw it. "Cain was very wroth"<sup>22</sup> may not convey much to us in the English translation; something more is required and something more is given. When the writer indicates that Cain's face "was fallen" he was visualizing emotion. We can see those lips that once were upturned to a smile fallen downwards now to a frown. We can almost hear it. We speak of passing from a state of depression to an exalted state, but the Hebrew gave it a more lively turn: "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into danc-

<sup>22</sup> Genesis 4:5.



ing." So says the psalmist,<sup>23</sup> and says so much more than we do with our abstractions. Or think again of the following word:

In six days the Lord made heaven and earth and on the seventh he rested and was refreshed.<sup>24</sup>

"Was refreshed" does not translate the Hebrew adequately; better would be "he drew his breath," or if we may say so without loss of reverence, "he took a breather."

## VII. THE HEBREW VITALIZES THE METAPHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES

This method of thinking with the eye and the concrete form of expression does not hinder the Hebrew from expressing what we call abstractions. Eternity, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence are expressed here with a sheer realism that vitalizes those terms. Such an abstraction as "eternity" he will express in a way all can understand:

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.  
Before the mountains were brought forth,  
Or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world,  
Even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God.<sup>25</sup>

"As old as the hills," we say, when we wish to speak of something very ancient and possessing a high degree of antiquity. My God is older than that, says the Hebrew, he was there before the hills were born and he will be there when the hills are no more. What could be more expressive than that?

Or take again the 139th Psalm where expression is given to the qualities or attributes that we designate as omnipresence, omniscience, and omnipotence:

O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me.  
Thou knowest my downsitting and uprising,  
Thou understandest my thought afar off.

For there is not a word in my tongue  
But, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.

Whither shall I go from thy spirit?  
Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?  
If I ascend up to heaven, thou art there:  
If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there.  
If I take the wings of the morning

<sup>23</sup> Psalms. 30:11.

<sup>24</sup> Exodus 31:17.

<sup>25</sup> Psalms 90:1.

And dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea  
 Even there shall thy hand lead me,  
 And thy right hand shall cover me.

Could we say that with anything like equal forcefulness in our speech? Does it not come home to us as none of our abstractions can? The attributes of God, the metaphysical attributes, are here articulated in life and touched with stark reality.

#### VIII. THE SAME FEATURES ARE FOUND IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

This theme can be pursued also in the New Testament. Is it not precisely the vital reference that makes the Gospels so attractive? We can understand and sympathize with Peter as he rubs his eyes with a sense of bewilderment, which many a student can share, over the Epistles of Paul: "in which are many things hard to be understood."<sup>26</sup> No one feels that way about the Gospels: but in Paul there are big, jaw-breaking words like "sanctification," "reconciliation," "adoption," "justification." In the Gospels, however, we have simple stories which even a child can understand:

A certain man had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. And when he had spent all there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.<sup>27</sup>

Almost every word in that simple recital is appropriately translated into good Anglo-Saxon, and the words smell of the soil from which they spring. They are rooted in the countryside and common life. No wonder people said, "We never heard it in this fashion before." Here was something unspeakably fresh, and in this Jesus is Hebrew through and through. Paul could not think or speak like that, though he boasted of one hundred per cent Hebraism. Jesus is definite and concrete in all his preaching and teaching: "the kingdom of God is like . . . ." this or that concrete thing or person. The sower striding down the furrow scattering the seed broadcast from his bosom, the birds circling overhead, the fisherman's boat dancing on the lake, and the men draw-

<sup>26</sup> II Peter 3:16.

<sup>27</sup> Luke 15:11ff.

ing their nets—all this is here and much more. But always he *thinks with the eye*, the word is always made flesh. Truth embodied in a tale enters in at lowly doors. "The common people heard him gladly," and there will always be a ready hearing for one who speaks so. The shadows of Greece and the Western world fall across the pages of Paul, but in Jesus we have the pure Hebrew genius. Hebrew has no root-words of more than three letters, and Jesus is as simple as that. He *thinks optically* while Paul reasons logically. In the Gospels we have vital religion, but in the Epistles we have theology. Perhaps that is putting the contrast rather strongly, but there is a real difference here. The Gospels give us "words of life." Jesus asserts in simplest form while Paul argues with great complexity. There is truth in the word of Tennyson, "there is no dew upon the grass after a windy night." We would not be less than fair to Paul—but we love the dew upon the grass.

#### IX. THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITTEN IN THE COMMON SPEECH

A brief word may be said here concerning the language of the New Testament, for this bears closely on the vitality of Scripture. The New Testament is written in Greek, but the Greek used here is not the classical Greek. For long it seemed strange that such precious words of life should be written in a Greek so apparently debased. Some scholars regarded it as a special form of Greek unknown to us from any other source. By some it was regarded as "the language of the Holy Ghost." One might have surmised that the divine Spirit would express itself in proper linguistic form, and that was not found to be so here. But here we find one of the most wonderful romances of the Egyptian desert, for within the last half century thousands of documents, written on a material made from the Nile reed or papyrus and usually called papyri, have come to light. These documents deal with all kinds of matters, consisting as they do of private domestic letters and business deeds; but their real significance lies in the fact that they reveal a form of Greek—we might call it a *patois*—that was in common use in a wide area of the Near East, and this is the language in which the New Testament is written. It was called the *Koine*, which is just the Greek word for *common*. The New Testament was written in the language of the common people, and its literary form springs from the workaday life of the common people. Thus we see again how deeply the Bible is rooted in the life of mankind. These vital origins lend to it its vital power.

# The Group Ministry

PAUL MEKKELSON

*The Group Ministry Plan for rural churches described—the author relates his own experience and appraises the possibility of application to other situations.*

## I

ONE OF THE most fruitful and rewarding periods of my life is the time I spent in a group ministry.

It all began in seminary. My three years at Garrett Biblical Institute were drawing to a close. It had been a rich experience, not merely in terms of books and classes, but even more because of friends and personal associations. We were interested in so many things there at Garrett, even beyond the regular curriculum. I found a special interest in one of the women students, for instance; we spent our last year together as a newly married couple. I was stimulated by a Fellowship of Reconciliation group as we explored the implications of a non-violent way of life. There were students from missionary fields in our midst to give us wider outlooks and newer approaches to Christian work. There were chances to work with others in the Commons dining hall and in the library. We could even see the relevance to our training for the Christian ministry of activity on the basketball court, where I put my six feet two inches to good use. When a group of evicted sharecroppers in southeastern Missouri staged a demonstration by camping on the national highway, five of us deemed it part of our education to drive from Evanston, Illinois, to investigate the situation.

All in all, several of us who had become close friends through these many happy experiences felt reluctant to break up our fellowship and to go our separate ways. We were not entirely satisfied with the prospects of the regular ministry, and we wanted to try something in the way of co-operative pioneering. We felt that the regular ministry was too isolated, individualistic, even competitive. So five of us, all but one married or engaged, met several times to talk over possibilities. We contacted various denominational leaders, inquiring for openings for us to work as a team at some home or foreign missionary project, a folk school, a co-operative farm. Commencement was just around the corner.

We wondered if anything would open to us or whether we were just wild-eyed dreamers who would have to settle down in traditional grooves.

Then a reply came from Dr. Aaron H. Rapping, at that time head of the Department of Town and Country Work of the Methodist Board of Missions. He stated that he could arrange to place us in rural parishes to work out a group ministry, a plan for co-operative work that he had developed after many years in the field of rural church leadership. This seemed like an answer both to his prayers and to ours. He interviewed us; we decided that this was our best opportunity and that we would work within our church system rather than break off by ourselves. Dr. Rapping then found a district superintendent who could place us on his district in a group of adjoining rural circuits. In the fall of 1940 we settled in southeastern Ohio.

We were a strange assembly that descended on the peaceful village of Adamsville one bright September day. The pastor there had moved out about a week earlier, so it became our temporary headquarters. The natives blinked as they looked at three trailers with furniture stacked to unbelievable heights. The next day came a van loaded with the balance of our combined worldly goods. Five preachers instead of one! That was something. But the townspeople were soon reassured that only one couple of our group would remain as their pastoral responsibility, although all of us were friends and would work together. We demonstrated our co-operative idea by overhauling the parsonage. The big square wooden building was in grand disarray when we arrived so soon after its former tenant had left. But our gang soon had it spick and span from attic to cellar.

As soon as we could, we made exploratory visits to our various other appointments. My wife and I drove eight miles over the rolling hills to Otsego, the little town that was to be our home. It contained the main station church of our four-point charge. The other three churches were small, open-country churches. In due course we moved into our new and modern parsonage. I delivered my first sermon with trembling knees, since this was my first full-time regular pastoral appointment. Not long after our arrival we were "pounded" at a reception, when our parishioners generously brought us a variety of produce and food supplies. Gradually we got to know our sturdy farmer folk and to see the picture of our parish work.

Our four-point charge was fairly typical of the other four parishes,

comprising in all nineteen churches. Eight miles beyond Adamsville another couple was located at Sonora. The other two families of our group were located twenty to thirty miles east of us in Guernsey County, so we soon discovered that we had two areas of co-operative interchange rather than one unified area of church co-operation. That was the best we could do, however, to make a start. We worked out joint programs and activities among the three sets of churches in Muskingum County and two sets in Guernsey County, while we ministers maintained a close fellowship. Then, as we realized we were not close enough geographically, we tried to consolidate ourselves in succeeding years in northeastern Muskingum County in order to carry out the full plan of a group ministry.

## II

The group ministry can be best described as involving at least these four elements: (1) natural areas, (2) teamwork of regular ministers, (3) fellowship council, (4) total program.

The group ministry begins with a sociological approach. It tries to fit the church program to the actualities and needs of the community. It recognizes that county lines, school districts, trade areas, large rivers or mountain ranges link certain people together and form *natural areas*. Church parishes and programs should be planned and geared to these natural communities, where the people read the same local newspaper, work in the same factories, have the same County Agricultural Agent, and so on. Such an area might be a small county with several towns nestling around the large county-seat center. Or it might be three or four mining towns grouped together in a mountain valley. Under modern conditions community lines are frequently very complex, and reach out to a larger area surrounding a city or large town which can provide more complete health, recreational, educational, commercial, and governmental services. The group ministry plan would have us determine by surveys and careful study of a general territory, the community lines forming the natural area wherein our church ministry can most effectively function. As a rule, the area will have or will require three to six or more local churches, each serving the smaller communities or neighborhoods. People in natural areas are used to thinking and acting together in the key relationships of community life. They face common problems, such as good roads, better schools, lack of doctors, religious indifference, most of which must be met on a county or regional basis.



On the basis, then, of a natural area or a group of churches connected by sociological ties, the group ministry calls forth the *co-operation and teamwork of the ministers*. This is the second essential element. There are various ways in which the ministers may be selected or drawn together and a group ministry begun. We will consider later the matter of how this ministry may be launched. But whether neighboring pastors already in the field decide to unite their efforts or specially chosen ministers are selected for a special project—the ministers of the natural area come together, abandoning the idea of individual competitive ministries and seeking to work for the fullest and most constructive type of service to the entire area.

At this point it is well to distinguish between the group ministry plan and the more widely known larger parish plan. In the larger parish plan, each minister is a specialist and conducts his specialty throughout the entire parish—whether music, religious education, recreation, counseling, or other type of leadership. In the group ministry, each minister is assigned to his own parish and has primary responsibility and leadership there. But the ministers exchange help and try to work together on common programs and problems that pertain to the area as a whole. Each minister has his strong points and his special areas of training and interest, in which capacities he can provide leadership on an interchange basis with his ministerial co-workers.

This ministerial teamwork, from one standpoint, is merely working within the existing system of pastoral assignments and church lines to achieve a more comprehensive and co-ordinated leadership. This is a starting point open to pastors everywhere at any time.

But co-operation in a group ministry must go beyond close ministerial friendship and professional collaboration. It must reach the rank and file of the church membership. The third element of the group ministry is the *fellowship council*, comprising both ministers and selected lay church leaders. Dr. Rapping suggests that one man, one woman, and one young person from each church should be selected for service on the fellowship council, along with the ministers of the churches involved. The challenge to a wider, more comprehensive church program is presented to this group, which proceeds to develop a program to meet the needs of the total area. The council creates what committees it may require to carry out its program, such as a committee on evangelism or on maps, charts, and surveys or on co-operation with other agencies.

An executive committee may take the lead in guiding and executing the work of the council.

This third element of lay participation is another distinctive feature of the group ministry as contrasted with the larger parish plan. Dr. Rapping states: "Basically the larger parish plan calls for a trained staff of specialists with an adequate budget. The group ministry plan starts with a natural area, the ministers in the churches, and the people. A procedure that does not get the people into the picture has a very poor foundation." So, rather than the ministers or hired specialists making a plan and calling on the people for support for its execution, the group ministry democratically makes the lay people jointly responsible for the planning, the organization, and the entire program that is undertaken. Thus the results can be more far-reaching and the whole enterprise more permanent.

The fourth element of the group ministry is its *total program*. The program of the group ministry seeks to change not only individuals but communities as well. It tries to establish the Kingdom of God in all areas of life, and to get away from the departmentalized view of life wherein churchgoing and praying are religious, while leisure-time activities and business and politics are worldly or secular. It endeavors to bring all people's activities and interests into relation to the most abundant Christian life for all. Its purpose is to meet the fullest and deepest needs of men and women in their actual concrete situations. It recognizes its special responsibility in the field of divine worship, Christian education, and evangelism, but realizes that the gospel of Jesus Christ must be translated and applied in the common life of our times. This means, for instance, that if the fellowship council discovers that housing conditions are unsanitary and inadequate for the working people in its area, it can properly as a part of its church program start a clean-up campaign, build some model homes, and try to secure new homes through the Federal Housing Authority.

The group ministry in its total program will co-operate with and work through the other community service agencies such as the Farm Bureau, public schools, health departments, Agricultural Extension Service, business groups, 4-H Clubs, fraternal orders. Where one or more of these is lacking and there is need for certain special services, the group ministry may request their help and assist them to organize in its natural area; it may even substitute for them under church auspices.

By all means the fellowship council, if the group ministry consists of one denomination only, will co-operate as fully as possible with churches of other denominations in its area. The group ministry may be interdenominational, as it should be ideally, but that involves added complications.

### III

Such is the general plan of the group ministry, which our particular group of ministers were trying to put into practice. As I have intimated, we were not entirely successful in putting the theory into effect, partly because of our geographic situation and partly because of our inexperience and the novelty of the whole enterprise.

But our group did do considerable teamwork in youth activities, evangelism, recreation, preaching exchanges, and the like. We met generally every Monday at different parsonages in turn, where we carried on work projects, had group devotions and book reviews, shared our ideas and problems, ate, and played. We equalized our salaries and even pooled most of our debts; my wife as an experienced bookkeeper supervised our accounts. A certain part of our total income went for debts; another part was channeled into a central fund for emergencies and special equipment for our group work like an addressing machine. Our basketball team of five men (all six feet tall or over) gave us quite a reputation as we played, and generally defeated, the high-school teams and other local combinations.

One of our early decisions was to work in and through our denominational system, to try to bring it closer to our ideal rather than to break from all ecclesiasticism and launch off by ourselves. Therefore, we made it a point to help with the district and conference programs in youth work, evangelism, and so on. Through the Conference Town and Country Commission and the District Book Club and such regular channels we tried to find a larger outreach for our ideas and ideals.

We soon found a variety of local organizations with which we co-operated in trying to improve rural life in its totality. Most of us shared in the Farm Bureau and its neighborhood discussion groups, the Farm Security Administration program, the Grange, 4-H Clubs, the Agricultural Extension program. Interdenominationally we had good association, both locally and through such agencies as Camp Ohio, the Ohio Council of Churches' summer conference for rural leaders. We tied in closely with the public schools. One wife taught for a year to meet

a local emergency. We tried to identify ourselves with our people without necessarily assuming their shortcomings or overlooking our central responsibility as ministers. We made a beginning with a lay or fellowship council in northeast Muskingum County.

As our third year together ended, a change in my family situation made it advisable for my wife and me and our small son to transfer to the Southwest, which was our earlier home. At that time—July, 1943—the rest of the group, consisting of four families, moved to a site more favorable for co-operative activities east of Cleveland in Lake and Geauga Counties. There an area fellowship council was formed and a co-operative program initiated that included a religious survey, musical gatherings, joint youth activities, and leadership training. The council met monthly in different churches of the area. During the second and third years of service in this new site, three of the four couples were drawn away to other fields. One family of the original five still remains at work at the same appointment in the Lake-Geauga Counties project. With the new leadership in the other churches of the natural area, it is expected that the group ministry and the fellowship council program will continue.

In evaluating our particular ministry it should be mentioned that we as ministers were a close fellowship group to begin with. We were not brought together to fill the leadership requirements of a certain area or group of churches, but we ourselves found a field, or two different locations, in which to serve. Some background of voluntary association and common experience as in a seminary are a great advantage for any group embarking on a group ministry. This conclusion is emphasized by Henrick F. Infield in his book, *Co-operative Communities at Work*, as follows: "Perhaps the secret of success in co-operative living lies in personal compatibility developed through mutual spontaneous choice of associates. The main problem is to bring together the individuals most willing and able to co-operate with each other."<sup>1</sup>

While our group may not have accomplished too much directly in the line of the group ministry, I am sure that we helped the idea along considerably. Our efforts did at least demonstrate unmistakably that ministers can work together, and that in so doing their effectiveness can be greatly increased. We helped many laymen and ministers to think about a more scientific and realistic approach in promoting the church

<sup>1</sup> Dryden Press, New York City, 1945, p. 62.

program. We stimulated our fellow ministers to more realistic brotherhood practices. The benefits to us were rich indeed. The fellowship and mutual encouragement have been priceless. The fellowship stimulated us to study, to persevere in pastoral work, and to try various creative endeavors, such as writing and craft work, far beyond what we would do as individual families. We found numerous contacts with national leaders in recreation, peace, rural life, education, church administrative fields simply because we were a group working together on something new, which contacts we would have missed as individuals. The doors of leadership have opened to us on our various lines far beyond our expectations. In the light of the fact that our particular group as a team of ministers did not last more than five years, we have felt that a group such as ours should aim at flexibility, drawing in new leadership blood as older members shift to new fields, thus preserving a longer continuity.

#### IV

It might be well at this point to consider how a group ministry may be launched. There are several ways to start such a project. In denominations of episcopal organization like the Methodist, the bishop or district superintendent or the equivalent will in actual practice play a prominent part in designating a group of churches or an area for development, and in selecting ministers who have a mind to co-operation and who possess varied talents. Centralized organizations like the Protestant Episcopal Church especially lend themselves to this type of work. In denominations or among local churches of the congregational type, several neighboring ministers or leading laymen may get the vision and press the group idea on their own initiative. Once the laymen conceive the need for a co-operative program over a larger area, they may call ministers capable of providing this type of leadership. Or, as was true in our own case, several ministers may have had a common background of experience and fellowship, may petition the church authorities for an opportunity to work together, and thus may succeed in getting themselves located in a natural area. A rural church committee or a rural church specialist may have made some surveys and suggested a project in a particular locality. An existing denominational unit—a district or subdistrict—or an interdenominational fellowship or action group, on the basis of special studies or surveys, or to meet certain pressing problems, may launch a group ministry.



From whatever source the original impetus comes, the approval and sympathetic support of the denominational officials are essential. The wholehearted participation of the pastors is imperative. And the laymen must at least be willing to be shown, with a few key laymen actively supporting the plan. As a rule the several churches involved will begin where they are with a relatively simple co-operative project, and the idea and program will grow. Very early in the development careful investigations must be made to determine the natural area or the effective working boundaries for the unit of co-operative action.

I have already suggested the values of the group ministry—the value of teamwork on the part of ministers and churches which affords a more scientific and over-all approach to the problems and needs of an area. The group approach is a movement toward greater brotherhood among the ministers. Instead of the struggle for “better” churches to the neglect of small and needy parishes, this type of ministry would seek to place the best men in the neediest and most fruitful fields on a longer-term basis, in which adequate minimum salary is assured. Such a group arrangement provides many advantages to the co-operating ministers, such as greater stimulation to study and to keep up on current affairs. It eliminates the loneliness and sense of isolation and frustration that come upon ministers in separate parishes. The group experience can help individual leaders to correct personality deficiencies, to learn more through the sharing exchange of skills and ideas, and hence to grow both in personal Christian character and in leadership ability.

A group ministry certainly has definite values for the lay people; it affords them larger vision, greater enthusiasm and a stronger sense of unity with the Church at large. Each local church profits by receiving more complete and varied ministerial leadership. The churches gain the satisfactions and spiritual growth resulting from participation in a more significant service program. Thereby “dead” churches may be jarred from their ruts and become revolutionized.

Another value of the group ministry arises from its total program designed to change the whole community life of an area. In backward or retarded regions, this plan undertakes to remove provincialism and to broaden limited cultural opportunities by working for a more secure economic life and by promoting wholesome recreation and sound native culture. In the rural field at large, the group ministry offers a democratic channel to uphold and strengthen the essential values of rural living and to overcome the inferiority complex of the small town and



open country. Thus there would be no stigma attached to being a farmer or a rural preacher, and the phrases "hick" and "only a country parson" would carry no barbs.

Basically, the group ministry will be tested by its success or failure in meeting spiritual needs better than the traditional ministry. It is no cure-all or general panacea for the church; it is a flexible instrument or technique that in many situations offers promise of making the labors of ministers and church leaders meet the total problems of people more fully and realistically than is usually the case.

## V

But the group ministry has many weaknesses and difficulties to overcome. In the first place, there are features of our ecclesiastical systems that are not conducive to a stable group ministry. In strongly organized denominations, where ministers are appointed and church administrative officers carry considerable authority, a shift in supervisory leadership may disrupt support for the project. And yearly appointments always leave the project rather uncertain and indefinite. On the other hand, in denominations of the congregational type, it may be much more difficult to get a group ministry under way, since there is no strong central church authority to deal with the needs of a group of churches and to direct the establishment of a group organization and program. Where the churches have complete local autonomy, one or two churches within an area suitable for group co-operation may refuse to participate or may be rooted down with indifferent pastors.

Unfortunately, too, our church systems foster in ministers individual desires for advancement and competition for the better-paying positions. Rural churches are generally the poorer churches on the basis of salary. Group ministries fit in best with rural situations. Frequently the group ministries seek to develop areas or localities lacking in leadership but with both great needs and latent possibilities. This means missionary support and often a low general salary income. Idealistic young couples may want to live sacrificially and adventurously, but with school debts and enlarging families to provide for, there is strong pressure to yield to the temptation to accept more lucrative positions further up the so-called ministerial ladder. Thus the whole matter of salary equalization and high minimum salary standards have a direct bearing on the success and permanence of group ministries.

Then the ministers of the group ministry have to be able to work

together. Here again is a limitation. Many ministers, or combinations of ministers, cannot get along. Many have grown up in the old school as individualists and are so habituated to being their own leaders in their own churches that they cannot adjust to the demands of a co-operative ministry. Some ministers have personality traits that would make them liabilities in a group ministry. So the personnel of a group must be carefully selected to be, or else trained to become, personally compatible. Such ministers must have a fundamental Christian outlook on life and must have attained emotional maturity.

There are other limitations to the group ministry idea. It is difficult to find an ideal situation geographically where the leaders can have unity and close teamwork in their parishes. There are difficulties if the parishes are too far apart or if they involve small and large churches. The group of ministers may become cliquish, or one or two may take all the leadership and honors to the exclusion of the other ministers. One man may involve the whole group in a scandal; his errors or his debts may discredit the whole enterprise. If one man is forced to move from his pastorate, it may upset the whole plan. Thus the lot of the group ministry is not an altogether easy one.

As previously suggested, this plan is not as adaptable to the extremely complex and exacting urban field as it is to the rural setting; although the principle of natural areas applies also to cities, and there can be extensive co-operation between urban churches on this basis.

Again, the group ministry is more difficult to work across denominational lines. It will be readily seen that one denomination already has extensive co-operation and fellowship among its own churches, since they have a common heritage, a similar general program, and some connectional features. But when a second or third denomination enters the co-operative picture for a joint program, there are vested interests and established loyalties even where no misunderstandings and jealousies exist. Different theological views, practical aims, and organizational structures intervene. By all logic the group ministry should be inter-denominational, at least where the area to be considered has more than one denomination. But it is much easier and simpler to begin with the churches of one denomination, then to move toward the most extensive kind of co-operative arrangements with the other denominations involved. Yet there is no reason why a small group of churches of two or more denominations cannot unite in a group program with a representative

fellowship council, except that as a rule they will move slowly, and will have to face and adjust comity problems if they are in earnest about a vital co-operative ministry to their total area.

By the same token that the group ministry should be interdenominational, it can be argued that the approach might be more effective if it involved different professions in the leadership team, such as a doctor, educator, agriculturist, recreation specialist, journalist—as is done in the mission field. Certainly ministers working in a group ministry will establish friendly relations with members of the other main professions and will collaborate as far as possible where they all deal with the same people and approach common community problems. However, the group ministry is based upon the retention of the personal pastor-parishoner relationship of the regular ministry, along with the advantages of teamwork and sharing of special skills.

This is a lengthy list of difficulties and weaknesses of the group ministry, which need to be recognized. Yet the group ministry offers real possibilities in spite of the many limitations inherent in any co-operative enterprise, especially in one that must operate within our ecclesiastical system. The trend of all modern life is toward increasing co-operation. Atomistic church programs are out of date in the atomic age! The group ministry plan offers churchmen a means of moving from our present church situations, away from competition and individualism toward effective interchurch co-operation. Accordingly, there is a growing interest, and more and more group ministries are being formed. The Methodist Church in its Crusade for Christ postwar reconstruction program has allocated \$115,400 to develop group ministries in the rural areas of our country. Various church conferences are discussing the plan, and reports of group projects are appearing in church periodicals. May this trend continue and the group ministry plan be given a full opportunity to prove its potential value.

## "Theologia Germanica"—A Theological Reprint

The *Theologia Germanica*, written by an anonymous priest of the "Friends of God" movement of the fourteenth century, is by common consent the best of the mystical writings of that group. Luther discovered it, published part of it in 1516, and the whole in 1518—marking in his preface that he had learned from it "more of what God and man and all things are" than from any other book except the Bible and St. Augustine. The translation here used, now out of print, is by Susanna Winkworth, published by Macmillan & Co., London, 1907. The present selection is made from an abridgment in pamphlet form—"Inward Light No. 26"—published by the Friends' Fellowship Council, 20 South 12th St., Philadelphia 7, Pa.

"THERE is nothing more precious to God . . . than humble obedience. In his eyes, one good work, wrought from true obedience, is of more value than a hundred thousand, wrought from self-will, contrary to obedience."

"Now he who liveth to himself after the old man, is called and is truly a child of Adam; and though he may give diligence to the ordering of his life, he is still the child and brother of the Evil Spirit. But he who liveth in humble obedience and in the new man which is Christ, he is, in like manner, the brother of Christ and the child of God."

"No one can be made perfect in a day. A man must begin by denying himself, and willingly forsaking all things for God's sake, and must give up his own will, and all his natural inclinations, and separate and cleanse himself thoroughly from all sins and evil ways."

"Behold! I have fallen a hundred times more often and deeply, and gone a hundred times farther astray than Adam; and not all mankind could amend his fall, or bring him back from going astray. But how shall my fall be amended? . . . I cannot do the work without God, and God may not or will not without me; for if it shall be accomplished, in me, too, God must be made man; in such sort that God must take to himself all that is in me, within and without, so that there may be nothing in me which striveth against God or hindereth his work. Now if God took to himself all men that are in the world, or ever were, and were made man in them, and they were made divine in him, and this work were not fulfilled in me, my fall and my wandering would never be amended except it were fulfilled in me also. And in this bringing back and healing, I can, or may, or shall do nothing of myself, but just simply yield to God, so that he alone may do all things in me

and work, and I may suffer him and all his work and his divine will. And because I will not do so, but I count myself to be my own, and say 'I,' 'Mine,' 'Me,' and the like, God is hindered, so that he cannot do his work in me alone and without hindrance; for this cause my fall and my going astray remain unhealed. Behold! this all cometh of my claiming somewhat for my own."

"In Christ's life and words and works, we find nothing but true, pure humility and poverty such as we have set forth. And therefore where God dwelleth in a man, and the man is a true follower of Christ, it will be, and must be, and ought to be the same. But where there is pride, and a haughty spirit, and a light careless mind, Christ is not, nor any true follower of his. . . ."

"Where men are enlightened with the true light, they perceive that all which they might desire or choose, is nothing to that which all creatures, as creatures, ever desired or chose or knew. Therefore they renounce all desire and choice, and commit and commend themselves and all things to the Eternal Goodness. Nevertheless, there remaineth in them a desire to go forward and get nearer to the Eternal Goodness; that is, to come to a clearer knowledge, and warmer love, and more comfortable assurance, and perfect obedience and subjection; so that every enlightened man could say: 'I would fain be to the Eternal Goodness, what his own hand is to a man.'"

"If a man may attain thereunto, to be unto God as his hand is to a man, let him be therewith content, and not seek farther."

"That we may thus deny ourselves, and forsake and renounce all things for God's sake, and give up our own wills, and die unto ourselves, and live unto God alone and to his will, may he help us, who gave up his will to his Heavenly Father—Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom be blessing for ever and ever. Amen."

## A Review of the Quarter's Fiction

JOHN C. SCHROEDER

NORMALLY I get some considerable pleasure from reading novels. Beyond pleasure there are other values and a good case can be made for the habit (or vice) of addiction to fiction. The presumption is that the novel offers an insight into human motives and actions through which an age or an individual experience may be appraised or understood. The novel sometimes is a more revealing record than the history or the biography, since imagination creates insights truer than factual records. My reading habits are conditioned by an unrecognized Puritanism. I find, for instance, that I have a sense of guilt if I read a novel in the morning. When I travel, I load a bag with a battery of books. "Heavy" books only can be read in the morning; biographies and popular history or theology are reserved for the afternoon; novels can be touched only after dinner and detective stories may enter the scene only after ten o'clock. Accordingly my bedside table gets top-heavy with a variety of things. Then when I find the novels poor, so that none seems to be worth more than half an hour, *Bleak House* or *Vanity Fair* or *War and Peace* come from the bottom to the top of the pile. They and their fellows have maintained that place for many weeks. The contemporary books may reflect our time but they reflect only images. They have no depth.

For instance, *The Hucksters*, which will sell thousands of copies, attempts to be a satire on the radio advertising business. Many of us who have given up listening to the radio have every sympathy with the book's attempt. The collection of fools described may be closer to life than would seem possible. There is a soap tycoon named Evans who pours a pitcher of water on one of his colleagues to demonstrate that his ideas are all wet and who spits on the director's table as an example of shock technique in advertising. This may be the method by which commodities are brought before the public's eye; but if it is, our economies are closer to bedlam than even Browder imagines.

The hero of the book, Victor Norman, presumably views his profession with moral detachment. One of his partners subsists on alcohol and benzadrine as he tries frantically to adjust himself to the absurd whims of his most lucrative account. The other partner in Hollywood



spends most of his time on horses. Each is forever trying to double-cross the other while the firm makes fabulous fortunes manipulating the vagaries of insane radio performers and lunatic businessmen.

The noble Vic, who flits through a series of casual affairs with women, finally comes to a soul-shattering romance with a "refined" matron, whose little children have captivated his tender heart. Since there are millions of people in the world, it is entirely possible among so many chances that such things can happen. But this "lady" talks and acts like an utter fool and Vic's final great renunciation of love and the advertising business made no dent whatever on my moral universe. There is humor in the book; it does deflate the advertising business; and its insanities may account for the public's having to listen to commercial plugs and soap operas.

I know I ought to like *The Adventures of Wesley Jackson* since Saroyan's soldier hates war, hates officers, hates the haters and loves laughter, life, and love. His father had been an emotional casualty of the last war and by the time he had become Wesley's Pop, he had degenerated into an amiable philosophic reprobate. Wesley's friends in the army were naïve engaging puppies who sang and whistled their way through horror and sought to give the world the gift of love. Saroyan's people are always the good little people of this world, although at times it is difficult to understand why their diffuse love doesn't persuade them to self-discipline. Even when Wesley, who had been searching for a wife who would give him a son (apparently every soldier wanted nothing so much as a son), finds his poor, starved, runaway mate in England, their love seems a most casual affair which involves little in the way of responsibility. In prison camp the German guards were amazingly kind fellows who even bothered to send to Paris for a straw hat for the lad who had miraculously lugged his trombone all over France but who couldn't play it unless he wore a straw hat. And when the hat came and Wynstanley began to play "It was the most magnificent thing that anybody ever saw . . . I don't know what's American as against what's something else, but I know that there is no man in the world capable of resisting the truth and beauty that came out of Wynstanley's trombone on that night of Saturday, July 22, 1944. I know the German guards couldn't resist the truth and beauty because having a hint of its enormity one of them had fetched Wynstanley his straw hat."

Now I agree with Saroyan that love and being honest with your-

self are what the world most needs. His Franciscan characters seem to have made their way through the sorrow of the depression. But when they are thrown into the horror of the war their thin protest is puerile. This ought not to be so. It is so because the gentle irrationality of their behavior lacks the strength that combines love with self-discipline. Their love is lush and sentimentalized, ready to do almost anything in life except to get hurt.

If you have been following Lanny Budd through Mr. Sinclair's six volumes, you may be in the mood to pick up this, the seventh. Seeing the world's history with Lanny is like learning history by looking at news-reels. They are always interesting; they always portray crises and they always seem to tie all problems in neat bundles. The world of the great, whom Lanny has known so intimately, again appears in undress parade. They are all here in this story of history from 1940 to 1942—Goering, Hess, Laval, Petain—and two new characters appear, William Randolph Hearst and Stalin.

There was some juice in the earlier volumes, but it seems squeezed out of this one. The reader gets tired of having Lanny appear in each crucial situation. The device has become too mechanical. However, all this exciting history through which we have been living is recalled and its moral is effectively pointed up. But the story now lacks imagination and climax since it must depend for its plot upon the unfolding of events already transpired. Lanny, Mr. Roosevelt's Spy No. I, lives intimately with the great, but the tragedy for which he has a front-row seat never seems to touch his inner being. To follow Lanny is an easy way of following the events of our time and Mr. Sinclair tells his tale, however tediously, with a careful eye for detail.

Silone's *Bread and Wine* was a distinguished novel. Now it is dramatized in *And He Hid Himself*. "The rediscovery of a Christian heritage in the revolution of our time remains the most important gain that has been made in these last years for the conscience of our generation." There are many who are not ready to identify martyrdom in the social revolution with Golgotha. But the mood of the peasants, the simple, uncomplicated devotion of the protagonists, the travail which comes from a serious attempt to see what brotherhood means—all become moving and holy in this drama. The speeches are too long for good theater and the action slow. But the theme is great and the play goes deep enough into life to make its urgency human and true.

Since each of us has several friends who are mentally sick, *The Snake Pit* is a revealing book which tells the sad story of their life. Virginia Cunningham is a patient at Juniper Hill. As the book opens, her mind is barely aware of what is going on about her. Then follows the revelation of what happens within the mind of a person suffering from schizophrenia—the lucid intervals and the blanked-out periods. There are the trips to the “Tubs,” the vain attempts to be rational enough to sort sheets or serve food. In the background there is the hospital with its patients who cannot be kept clean, who share their few possessions with each other until they become sane enough to know better; with the nurses, some of whom are intelligent and some of whom are stupid; with the general despair and sad hopelessness of people who know at least that they cannot return to the world.

The book is not too clear in its diagnosis of the causes of Virginia's collapse nor in the therapy of her cure. It is not an angry book even though the ineptitudes and the sordidness of mental hospitals are made clear. Decidedly it is worth reading since it portrays the life of so many poor people who have to live their blank lives in our overcrowded institutions.

**The Hucksters.** By FREDERICK WAKEMAN. New York: Rinehart and Co., Inc. pp. 307. \$2.50.

**The Adventures of Wesley Jackson.** By WILLIAM SAROYAN. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co. pp. 285. \$2.75.

**A World to Win.** By UPTON SINCLAIR. New York: The Viking Press. pp. 627. \$3.00.

**And He Hid Himself.** By IGNAZIO SILONE. New York: Harper & Brothers. pp. 126. \$2.00.

**The Snake Pit.** By MARY JANE WARD. New York: Random House. pp. 278. \$2.50.

## Book Reviews

**World Order: Its Intellectual and Cultural Foundations.** Edited by F. ERNEST JOHNSON. A publication of the Institute for Religious Studies. Distributed by Harper & Brothers, New York and London, 1945. pp. ix-247. \$2.00.

*World Order: Its Intellectual and Cultural Foundations* is the fourth in the Religion and Civilization Series published by the Institute for Religious Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. The previous volumes dealt with *Group Relations and Group Antagonisms*, *Religion and the World Order*, and *Civilization and Group Relationships*.

All the contributors to the present volume hold that the fundamental causes of international disintegration are spiritual and that reconstruction must come through changes in men's spiritual outlook. Practically every writer stresses the importance of democracy and personal freedom as the foundation stones on which to build a new world order. They agree on the necessity of some surrender of sovereignty by the great nations. With all this the reviewer is in agreement. But as an economist, the reviewer is particularly concerned with the question whether one form of economic organization rather than another is more likely to promote the spread of democracy and individual freedom and with the relationship of sovereignty to the form of economic organization adopted by a state. It is from this standpoint that he proposes to examine the contributions in the volume.

To the reviewer, Dr. Mordecai M. Kaplan's discussion of the "Jewish Contribution to a World Order" is particularly satisfying. Dr. Kaplan, in a moving plea against anti-Semitism, points out that "the Jews were the one group in the Western world that was the most conspicuous beneficiary of the humaneness, the reasonableness, the sweetness and light which at first characterized free-enterprise democracy. From a harassed and hunted pariah folk they became almost overnight completely Westernized freemen, holding their own in the keen competitive struggle let loose by the policy of *laissez faire*." We, of today, tend to forget the ethical content of *laissez faire* as a doctrine. This is a timely reminder. Dr. Kaplan does not imply, however, that modern society can operate without social controls. "In the postwar world," he says, "we will have to become used to the idea that laws and legal sanctions are indispensable to the safeguarding of rights. The troublesome question as to what kind of economy is best calculated to raise the national income and standards of living and to bring about universal employment, whether it shall be individual enterprise, collective or mixed, is a matter for economic strategists and experts to decide." This seems to be the position which men of religion should take when they undertake to help form public opinion in favor of a better world order.

The opening contribution by Rabbi Louis Finkelstein, President of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, is entirely consistent with this point of view. He points out that there are certain unchanging standards of human conduct about which the religious leaders can speak with confidence. He lists them as follows: "that all men are equal, that love is better than hatred, that charity is superior to revenge, that truth is good and falsehood is bad, that freedom must be sought and tyranny overcome." He wisely adds that "the specific situations and interpre-

tations may be subject to difference of opinion." As regards modern international conflict, he points out that the economic issues are "often nothing more than rationalizations for irrational and subconscious impulses to struggle." In agreement with most economists, he does not explain wars primarily in terms of economic motivations. He calls upon scholars and men of letters to help introduce clarity into our cultural standards, to reduce the area of irrationality in our civilization.

Dr. Edgar S. Brightman, Professor of Philosophy at Boston University, and Dr. John C. Bennett, Professor of Christian Theology and Ethics at Union Theological Seminary, in their contributions appear, at least to this reviewer, to exceed their competence when they conclude that the area of free enterprise must be drastically restricted. Thus Dr. Brightman remarks: "It may be that the economic life must be more and more relegated to the areas of prescription. How any national community can be reconstructed after the war without something like economic regimentation is all but unthinkable. How much more will such regimentation be necessary to the creation of a world community." He admits that the task of administering a world community would be formidable. To the reviewer, at least, the task would seem utterly impossible unless statesmen are prepared to turn over to the automatic processes of a free market at least part of the task of inducing men to devote themselves to the production of the goods and services most needed by free men.

Dr. Bennett deplores the continued faith of American Protestants in the free enterprise system. He quotes with approval a recent Geneva document which asserts that "the social and industrial anarchy which has characterized the capitalistic system is one of the chief reasons for the present catastrophe" as representing the consensus of opinion among European Protestant churchmen. My own fear is that if the American Protestant church follows the two leaders just cited, it will contribute to the destruction of all that the church and these scholars hold most precious.

Dr. Edwin G. Nourse, Vice-President of the Brookings Institution, provides the only contribution by an economist. The reviewer is in complete agreement with his analysis and with his three-plank platform of postwar international relations: the outlawing of war, self-determination of populations, and liberalizing of trade and cultural intercourse. Those who believe that the nations must surrender control of population movements, as Dr. Bennett apparently does (see p. 130), would do well to read Dr. Nourse's wise remarks on this point.

Space forbids discussion of the many interesting and valuable contributions made by the other contributors. Dr. F. Ernest Johnson, Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University and Editor of the Series, concludes this stimulating book with an address entitled "What Has the War Taught the Churches?"

JOHN V. VAN SICKLE

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(For reasons of space it was necessary to cut out this reviewer's statement of the point of view upon which his comments are based. In brief, he believes not in "rugged individualism," but "that social controls entirely consistent with the requirements of the private enterprise system can bring about a greater equalization of income and a far greater equalization of power than has as yet been attained in totalitarian Russia."—Ed.)



**One World in the Making.** By RALPH BARTON PERRY. New York: Current Books, 1945. pp. 275. \$3.00.

Anything that Professor Perry writes is always worth while, and this new book is more than just another volume on international relations. Ever since Wendell Willkie coined the phrase "One World," it has been on everybody's lips. The writer shows how geographically and in other respects our world has become "one world." Speed and mass production, with new inventions, have all contributed their part. Folks live closer together now than ever before and know more about each other and their intimate affairs. The phrase, "one world," however, means more than just masses of people, masses of land, water, mountains, cities, and towns. It means that there is a moral and spiritual unity among all people, and that all must think of this world as our common home. Our problem is to create the social conditions and the spiritual understanding that will enable us to live as good neighbors on this globe.

Dr. Perry has in a most interesting manner described how the idea of one world has developed, and then stresses the importance of the moral foundations being laid, strong and sure. The United Nations is a good start toward the organization of peace, but it must and can be perfected through experience and by the test of trial and error. No city is ever completed—there is always something that can be added. So the world organization must be accepted as the best we can get at present, and we must go on to the more perfect.

We must learn to think of international law as more than just the extension of municipal law. International law recognizes the moral responsibility of states as states. This is in line with the Hebrew prophets, who taught group responsibility and that the sins of the nations bring suffering upon the people. No world government can be effective until all nations agree that the sovereignty of all is greater than the sovereignty of the individual nation.

The author defends with vigor the right of idealists to take pre-eminence in human affairs. He says of ideals, "they are not mere rosy pictures created by the imagination of fairy tales composed for children. They are goals to be achieved by human flesh and blood and embodied in a firm structure of physical and social organization." In other words, an ideal is something to be realized. Holding an ideal implies that it can be translated into accurate, definite results; he pictures the moral man as one who is on his way from what is to what ought to be.

The chapter on world economy is of special value, for in the long run freedom from want is the greatest freedom of all. Here we are facing the realistic issues of bread and butter. Sympathy for the suffering people of the world and a feeling of responsibility for bad social conditions that grow out of selfishness and neglect are recognized in the Charter of the United Nations as matters of international concern.

The author fairly and generously deals with the part the churches and religious-minded people in all lands have played in the last few years. The part they will play in the next few years will determine in a large measure the success or failure of the co-operative efforts now being made to transform a physical, mechanistic world into the "great community"—where all people will assume their full duties as world citizens and so help themselves and all others to live out their lives in freedom from fear and freedom from want.

HENRY A. ATKINSON

The Church Peace Union, New York City.



**The United States Moves Across the Pacific.** By KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE. New York: Harper & Brothers. pp. ix-174. \$2.00.

In this timely book Dr. Latourette presents the thesis that the United States is in the Far East to carry main responsibility for at least a generation, and more probably another fifty years. His main argument for the extent of this involvement is the steady trend on the part of the United States toward participation in the affairs of East Asia, in particular its consistently reaffirmed policy of standing for the territorial and administrative integrity of China. He points out that the so-called "Stimson Doctrine" of nonrecognition of the results of aggression, proclaimed under a Republican President, was really first stated by the Democratic Secretary of State, Bryan, in 1915. No matter which party was in power, in most matters American Far East policy has been continuous. "A presidential administration might accelerate or retard the trend. It could not hope to reverse it."

This doctrine of responsibility for the territorial and administrative integrity of China was extended in 1939-41 to cover the regions to the south. To all intents and purposes the United States stands committed to maintaining the post-war status quo of the whole range of territory from the Amur to Singapore and of the whole island chain running from Hokkaido to Indonesia. None of these countries is as yet able to defend itself in case of aggression. Dr. Latourette surveys this whole situation, with its implications for the United States in his second chapter; and in the third chapter makes some realistic suggestions as to what to do about it. He recognizes Russia as the greatest enigma for the prophet, but sees it as the one traditionally great European power which can still play a major part in the East Asia solutions.

This book has special value as an up-to-the-minute-before-last appraisal of the whole situation. Aside from one or two minor inaccuracies and the fact that one can never be absolutely correct in appraising a situation that changes daily, it is dependable. One feels that Dr. Latourette has not quite sufficiently realized the political and military complexities of the atomic age. One also wonders whether Christian education does not have a far more important future in the democratization of Japan than he foresees, though he recognizes its significance in building a strong, democratic China. Nevertheless, everyone concerned with government, business, or mission policy in East Asia should face its challenge.

WYNN C. FAIRFIELD

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**God and the Atom.** By RONALD KNOX. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1945. pp. 166. \$2.00.

In *God and the Atom*, Monsignor Ronald Knox has clearly and brilliantly raised and discussed the religious problems connected with the invention and use of the atomic bomb. He cites the exclamation of an army nurse upon receiving the news of Hiroshima, "Now I know there is no God," and shows how shallow and unwarranted is such a conclusion. He is equally critical of those thoughtless religionists who are blind to the social consequences and who continue to look at such an event from an altogether otherworldly standpoint. While admiring the unshakeable faith of these to whom individual salvation is all that matters, he is aware of the shortsightedness of such a position. There are two important respects in which religious thought is affected.

One of these is the moral problem involved in the use of the atomic bomb. The author feels that at this point we are due for an increasing sense of guilt and shame in having used it as we did, putting ourselves more or less on a level with the Japanese in their sneak attack on Pearl Harbor. He wishes we had not used it but had given notification of its possession with the comment that we would not resort to it because we did not consider its use honorable. Failing this, he would have had us at least demonstrate it where human lives were not at stake. Of course, the moral problem comes stark up against the ethics of Christianity and those ethics do not sanction war. What justification there might be, the author finds in the prevention of further slaughter by the aggressor.

The other problem concerns the character of God. Monsignor Knox shows the relation of freedom to moral character and that the responsibility for the misuse of natural gifts lies with man himself. He points out that suffering may be as salutary to man as comfort and success, and that after all these are not the true goal of man but rather the achievement by man of moral character and spiritual self-realization. The greatest of all dangers would arise from the use of the atom to "shoot us back unprepared, into the vortex of prosperity." If on the other hand its discovery can bring us to a profounder consciousness of moral and spiritual obligation its presence will become a blessing. Blessing or curse, however, depends not upon God but upon men.

Everyone should read and give thoughtful attention to this book which is profound in analysis, clear in statement, and liberal in thought.

RALPH TYLER FLEWELLING

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**Event in Eternity.** By PAUL SCHERER. New York: Harper & Brothers. pp. x-234. \$2.00.

*Event in Eternity* is a helpful, even more, an inspiring book which deserves a wide reading by clergy and laity. Dr. Scherer bases his thesis upon chapters 40 to 66 of the Book of Isaiah. His book is not a commentary in the technical sense; rather he uses this great background of the message of the prophet as a means of delivering a searching message to our own souls and to our times. In a series of chapters on "The Glory and Majesty of God," "God in History," "The Eternal Purpose," "The God Who Would Be Man," and "The Divine Vocation," with deep spiritual insight, and a consciousness of the critical days in which we live, in a vivid style with excellent illustrative material, Dr. Scherer points out not only our weaknesses but also shows us the way of salvation. He not only understands the prophetic message, but he applies it with cogency to the needs and opportunities of today with a realism much greater than that shown by many who would consider themselves more "modern" in their attitude toward God and the disciplines of the spiritual life. One could illustrate this by his refusal to accept anything less than God as the center of Christianity. "Here are at least four kinds of so-called religion," he writes, "which have come near ruining American Christianity: the therapeutic, the 'intellectual,' the moral, and the emotional."

Obviously this statement needs elaboration, and for this I would refer you to the book. It seems captious to be even slightly critical of such a splendid book. Style is a matter of taste. I wished myself at times for fewer adjectives,

clauses, and exclamation points. But here is a book suggestive for preachers, and illuminating to laymen and lay women.

RT. REV. HENRY K. SHERRILL

Bishop of Massachusetts, Boston, Massachusetts.

**The Practice of Religion.** By FREDERICK C. GRANT. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946. pp. 271. \$2.50.

The thesis of this book is that "religion is life controlled by the consciousness of God," and that its possibilities and values will not fail to be discovered by those who "try it." The author believes that both the control of life and the consciousness of God can be cultivated; consciousness, chiefly by prayer, and control by alternating experiences with struggle and relaxation. Thus the theoretical and practical are fused in a book that will be relished not alone by the minister but also by the thoughtful layman.

The major portion of the volume is devoted to an examination of some of the chief subjects of the religious experience, the author modestly disclaiming any attempt to be complete. These subjects are effectively, sometimes strikingly handled, though with occasional obvious bias. Ethics is shown to be dependent on religion, Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom and Paul's doctrine of the empowering Spirit being the chief points of connection in the New Testament. In this setting a fine plea is made for formal instruction in ethics to youth of high-school age and younger, the present habit of postponing a course in ethics until the junior year of college being properly held up to scorn. On the other hand, there is a weak appeal to Christian businessmen to help wage war unselfishly!

Sin is understandingly treated, not primarily as fault or crime, but as wrongdoing God. Freedom is presented against the background of the freedom of God which is shown chiefly in the Incarnation. The idea that suffering is often a divine call is properly stressed as the Christian viewpoint, though in its development the best New Testament materials, First Peter and Hebrews, are strangely omitted. The author recognizes mysticism as lying at the heart of all religion, certain of its extravagant forms being suited to some temperaments and not to others. In the discussion of the church the author splendidly transcends his denominational bounds with a plea for the recognition of the priest as only a layman through whom all laymen speak; and there is a clear sense of the value of diversity in unity in such matters as creed and worship. The Anglican speaks out, however, in the stress on institutions and in the rosy picture of the probability of many organic unions. There is decidedly too much of the "American-British"-against-the-rest-of-the-world complex.

The book is warm, friendly, and generally readable, though the style is sometimes marred by long parentheses. Dr. Grant, the Professor of Biblical Theology at Union Seminary, is here at his best in the combination of a pastoral approach with scholarly insights.

JULIAN PRICE LOVE

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**Springs of Hellas, and other Essays.** By T. R. GLOVER. Cambridge, at the University Press. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946. pp. xv-210. \$2.75.

S. C. Roberts in his introductory memoir says that in the purely academic circle of Cambridge "Glover tended to be on the defensive. He was at some pains to emphasize that he did not belong to a public school or to the Anglican Church and that the severer type of classical don disapproved of him because his books were too readable." Yet he was every inch a Cambridge man, a scholar of profound learning, and a son of the Renaissance as well as an Evangelical Christian.

I first met Glover many years ago at Chautauqua where we were both lecturing. At first he was a bit stiff, with a touch of the unconscious condescension of the uninterested. But when one day in a rather expansive mood he told of ragging Lloyd George in his Latin presentation of the Prime Minister for an honorary degree at Cambridge, I asked him gravely if he thought it was "cricket" to poke fun at a great public figure in a language that distinguished person did not understand when he was presenting him for high honor at his university. Glover at once became uneasily aware of my existence and we soon became very friendly. There were always plenty of burrs about Glover and you had to understand the kindness behind his gibes. Once at the University of Chicago, Shailer Mathews admitted his satisfaction in respect of the buildings of that ample institution, saying that he thought they reminded one of the buildings of Oxford and Cambridge. Forgetting that Mathews might have forgotten his Boswell, Glover replied crushingly, "Don't be obscene." There is a wholly delightful story of how the advocate of a certain sophisticatedly spiritual movement urged him to come to a house party at the National Capital where he would have an opportunity to influence an amazing collection of bigwigs. Glover felt that he had other engagements which he could not honestly break. He was told that he had no need of scruples, the man who wanted him in Washington was divinely guided and would assume all the moral responsibility. Glover was rather terrible when he was roused, and he closed the discussion quickly. "I do not know much about divine guidance," he said, "but I do know that Almighty God is a gentleman and I am not coming to your house party."

When a man of such wit and personal vitality is one of the best latin scholars of his period and a writer whose sentences literally glow with living energy, the result is seen to be not only distinguished but memorable. Glover wrote many books, and their wide and careful learning and their shrewd humanity will long keep them alive. He never wrote about a man without making you see the flash of his eye. He never wrote about a period without letting you gaze upon the busy pageant of its life.

The volume of posthumous essays *Springs of Hellas* has all his rich and varied personal quality and all of his manifold learning. You are inclined to say when you have finished the essays on "Cicero Among His Books" and "Polybius at Rome" and "The Welding of Mankind" that civilization is justified as long as it can maintain the forms of life which makes such scholars possible. The essay "The Exiles" is poignant enough at a time when so many distinguished homeless wanderers move about the earth. The essay on "The Mind of St. Paul," provocative and effective as it is, perhaps reveals more of the ways of the mind of Glover than of the mind of the great apostle. There were heights in Paul's mind to which Glover never climbed. There were depths to Paul's thought into which Glover never moved. He was a devoted Evangelical to whom the full grandeur of his own faith was never quite revealed.

All in all, we may well thank God for this public orator of Cambridge University, even as we chuckle over the very human being who after addressing a vast Baptist rally collapsed into a chair exclaiming: "I say, it's good to be back among sinful people. Can I have some food?"

DEAN LYNN HAROLD HOUGH

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**Religion in Higher Education Among Negroes.** By RICHARD I. MCKINNEY.  
Yale University Press, 1945. pp. xiv-165. \$3.00.

Dr. McKinney in his study, *Religion in Higher Education Among Negroes*, has made available a valuable contribution to that phase of Negro education that has been deeply neglected in most general surveys of the field. He traces the influence of religion in the founding of American colleges and high lights the motivation that it generated in the founding of colleges for Negroes. Here is a somewhat detailed analysis of the relation of religion to the basic problem in the lives of Negro students due to the peculiarities of the social setting in which they move and think and function. He has not neglected a consideration of the attitudes of the persons responsible for shaping the broad policies governing the schools and of those other individuals on whose shoulders rests the responsibility for implementing these policies. There is a classification of church-related and state-controlled colleges in terms of the relevancy of religion, formally considered. The role and the status of the religious worker on the campus is examined. A discussion of the course offerings is outlined in comparison with and in contrast to the voluntary student religious organizations. There is a statement of the financial expenditures for religion in the various colleges with a breakdown in terms of salaries of teachers of religion, amounts spent for voluntary religious activities such as the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., and the contribution that the students themselves make to over-all national student religious movements. The chapter before the final "Findings and Recommendations" is a discussion of the sampling of opinion of upperclassmen regarding the students' attitudes toward religion (rather loosely defined), toward compulsory chapel, and toward the religious sincerity of the college administration and staff. In this significant chapter the author utilizes his years of teaching and administrative experience on several college campuses and seems able to deal with the issues from the inside.

In the final chapter concerning "Findings and Recommendations," the most significant item has to do with the first recommendation. It says in part that "the College for Negroes, if it is to be effective, must take account of the various environmental factors which help to condition the life of the student before, during, as well as after his college experience. This means, among other things, that the college administrators will be interested . . . in the personality growth and adjustment of each student." It is obvious that what Dr. McKinney says about Negro education in particular applies to education for any other group in our common life. One would wish that a clearer and more definitive distinction could have been made between the issues facing the average student coming out of the average American college and those facing the average Negro student coming out of the average Negro college. It seems to me that the unique role of religion is best revealed in an analysis of these relative issues.

One of the functions of American education is to guarantee and to per-



petuate the established patterns of American life. The presupposition is that the persons who are being educated are to function in the social order on the side of those who make the policies that determine the destiny of the country. The very fact that it is one of the common judgments of public-school education that it is well within the range of possibility of the most ordinary male student in the class to become President of the United States, is a case in point. This means that the degree to which American education is effective in the lives of the students marks the measure of the level of privilege and control for those who are exposed to it. When a Negro boy comes through that same system, whether it be in Cambridge, Massachusetts, or Daytona, Florida, he is to some extent imbued with the same social estimate of his possibilities. When he is through with his education, however, he is faced with the problem that in broad outlook, there is no ceiling to his effective aspirations—he has the techniques and the philosophy that belong to the typical American—but he functions in society as a member of a minority. This fact is apt to issue in the profoundest kind of frustration affecting his total outlook. In addition, if he has been educated in a segregated school, it means that the very conditions under which his education takes place are a constant denial of the basic assumptions by which his education is motivated. Therefore, the only possible justification for a segregated school in our country is the demand that in that kind of restricted environment, educators and students should test out techniques and methods which, when released in society, will be so revolutionary in their effect that they will destroy the very segregated institutions that made it possible to develop these techniques and methods. The Christian religion with its revolutionary ethic would be most reassuring and stimulating to the Negro student in such a dedication. It should mean that the revolutionary ethic of Christianity would be provided with a revolutionary technique. Unless religion in higher education among Negroes performs this function, it will not be able to challenge and inspire the loyalty and devotion of the most thoughtful administrators, faculty, and students on the various campuses.

Dr. McKinney has done a distinguished service in clearing away the underbrush and, by implication, high lighting the unique contribution of religion to the evolving pattern of higher education among Negroes.

HOWARD THURMAN

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**Introducing the New Testament.** By A. M. HUNTER. London: S. C. M. Press, 1945. pp. 125. 6s.

During recent years certain writers in the field of New Testament literature have become aware of the need felt by busy ministers and interested laymen for comprehensive, yet compressed and clear-cut statements of work done by scholars in the field. Among books written to supply this need the most recent and one of the most satisfactory is A. M. Hunter's *Introducing the New Testament*. With the "ordinary reader" in mind, Mr. Hunter undertakes to introduce the most significant of the New Testament documents to the reader by grouping them under three main headings: the four Gospels, the early church and St. Paul, and the writings of other apostolic men. This main section is prefaced by several brief chapters which deal with problems of a general character and is concluded by an epilogue on the unity of the New Testament. The author does



not treat the documents in question chronologically but, as he points out, follows an order of "spiritual logic . . . for Matthew, the first Gospel, with its emphasis on Jesus as the fulfiller of the old covenant, helps to bind together the two Testaments, and Revelation, coming at the end, supplies a perfect *dénouement* to the story of salvation with its message of the judgment and victory of God" (p. 21).

For each of the fourteen New Testament documents under consideration Mr. Hunter presents a concise, informative statement regarding authorship, date, the circumstances under which it was written, and describes its characteristics and content. In his brief analysis Mr. Hunter necessarily limits himself to the presentation of a single point of view on issues which New Testament scholars are not in complete agreement; for example, that Luke, the writer of the third Gospel, is certainly a physician by profession. (p. 40). But since Mr. Hunter attempts to compress the detailed and sometimes fragmentary work of New Testament scholarship into a brief book, oversimplification and the elimination of confusion on these controversial issues will not be held against him. He has without doubt succeeded in making available for the "ordinary reader" an *introduction* to a study of the New Testament. In his treatment of the material he shows an appreciation of scholarly research, particularly that of Great Britain. By vividly reconstructing the situation faced by the early Christian believers, he high lights the importance of the religious issues with which their writings are primarily concerned. The strength of Mr. Hunter's book, therefore, lies in the fact that he stresses the significant theme expressed by these early Christian writers who, in spite of the diverse forms of their writings and their diverse terms and idioms, had one basic conviction that appears throughout the New Testament—namely, that "with the coming of Christ the living God had spoken and acted decisively for the salvation of his people" (p. 114).

LUCETTA MOWRY

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**Christ and Man's Dilemma.** By GEORGE A. BUTTRICK. New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946. pp. 224. \$2.00.

"Man is constitutionally ignorant, endemically wicked, irrevocably mortal; but he knows it, and is therefore above his ignorance, sin, and mortality; yet he is not delivered from his lower life by his own power, but remains helpless without the Great Companion." This sentence, near the end of the first chapter, sums up the condition of modern man.

Because he is ignorant, prone to do evil and haunted by death, he must find his salvation in God as revealed in Christ or go down to defeat. His dilemma is either Christ or Chaos.

This is certainly no shallow optimistic utopianism. And if it sounds pessimistic and neo-orthodox, it is not that either. In method and essential spirit, Dr. Buttrick is true to the finest traditions of liberalism, but it is a liberalism which is rooted in historic Christianity and which has been chastened and deepened by the tragic events of history. The revelation of God in Christ to which he points us for deliverance is not a mechanical or external type of revelation. Christ is the revelation of God because he lives and teaches the truths that are deep in life itself.

Dr. Buttrick's power lies, first of all, in his frank facing of contemporary facts and issues. The book lives in the world we all have to live in. The chapter on "Christ and Education" is particularly strong in its picture of the common secular attitude toward God, which is stated as follows: "Perhaps God does not exist; perhaps he is only the projection of wishful thinking. If he does exist, he does not matter, at least not enough for us to risk religious controversy. Let the church schools talk about him. Whatever our compunctions, no great harm is done by leaving him unmentioned during the school week."

The whole book is a glowing and urgent protest against that sort of assumption of the irrelevancy of religion which so largely pervades modern life. "We are wicked. We are resolved in pride to be our own providence. We have grabbed at the cosmos as if it were ours to have, to hold, and to exploit." . . . "We must turn our eyes from mechanisms to life." . . . "We must choose between ourselves and Christ. Every age is momentous; but, if we see our time aright, our age is climactic, as though man, emerging from a labyrinth, might now stride toward the light."

ALBERT W. PALMER

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**God In Us.** By A. CAMPBELL GARNETT. Chicago: Willett, Clark and Company, 1945. pp. x-162. \$1.50.

Three years ago Dr. Garnett had sketched the background for this volume. With remarkable consistency he developed the religious implications of certain sociological and psychological materials. His brand of empiricism led him to suppress the object side of faith, until faith became mainly devotedness. "Faith is believing *in* something, and only incidentally a believing *about* something." Religion means attitude, action, and feeling. It enters the human struggle on the side of a more inclusive good and against an ever-present egoism. Religion is God performing certain works in us.

*God In Us* undertakes to elaborate and clarify this theme. To begin with, God is that elemental will to the larger good which is present throughout the organic world. At the animal level this straining is recognized as the urge to preserve life; in man it is conscience—that increasing tension between local good and a more inclusive one. In a foundational sense, then, conscience is the voice of God. To this fact historical religion bears perpetual witness by developing and shaping the societal impulse toward a greater good. Sin is rooted in spiritual inertia, in the lag of the provincial will. Opposition to the potentially greater good constitutes a fight against God.

In conscience as the will to greater good we come face to face with God. "We know him more intimately than we know any other person." We know his actual willing, and that right immediately. By inference from this intimate experience we may learn much else about God's operations in the world. That original and immediate intuition is sole judge of itself and of all other inferential knowledge.

Religion is indispensable because it is a useful ally of an expanding conscience. Society languishes without its services. "The central thought of religion is that of a divine moral law which is above the decrees of men." A major difficulty in Garnett's discussion develops, however, from the too limited

view which he takes of conscience. Ethics is dwarfed so as to provoke a demand for religion. The Golden Rule concludes the sum of Christian ethics, and so is the clearest word of God to men. The purely formal character of that rule is overlooked. Actually the Golden Rule is neither religious nor specifically Christian. Everywhere in ethical literature it appears as a generalized elemental sense of justice. It stands in need of a kind of direction which the rule cannot itself supply. Only Jesus can be trusted to give it adequate content, and to him the rule is unnecessary.

By reason of Garnett's inadequate interpretation of moral experience the God who is in us remains just the *will* to a greater good. What is good—the cardinal issue—is left to our intelligence. There the assignment is allowed to remain without rigorous specification. Instead, Dr. Garnett turns, after the manner of a Samuel Alexander, to God's method in the evolutionary process of animate nature. Even here the confusion of temporal and logical origin crops in, especially in connection with a somewhat original and altogether fascinating doctrine of space. In the end one has difficulty determining which is primary, God or space. Space itself is the active, omnipresent reality in the system of inter-related operations. Space "feels and strives" and even attains consciousness. All is well, however, inasmuch as we come out with "a supreme and all-embracing Person with an eternal, conscious purpose." Is that outcome of interest-processes what is meant by the transcendence of God?

The book makes fascinating reading. It outlines a great adventure, guided by a magnificent spirit. It faces an open road where always faith means faithfulness. Along that road there is ample opportunity for exploration, which may under God find better guiding principles. They are surely needed.

DEAN IRL G. WHITCHURCH

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California.

**Man and Society: the Scottish Inquiry of the Eighteenth Century.** By GLADYS BRYSON. Princeton University Press, 1945. pp. 287. \$3.00.

Man has always been his own most perplexing problem. Any attempt to understand and interpret human nature is at best only an attempt—an endeavor never converted into an accomplishment, an initial undertaking never quite issuing in success. This is due to a number of different reasons. For one thing, man, examining himself, is never able to transcend the limitations set by his own interests and fixed by his own desires. Though at times he may appear caustic and dissatisfied, critical, and even cynical, he knows full well that he is judging his present status in the light of either a past pattern that is lost yet remembered or an ideal pattern that is desired yet unrealized. In the one instance, the present is discredited by the past; in the other, it is incidental to the future. But human nature is never divorced from itself, and the subject examined remains the same as the examiner and the one who determines the result. Man is at once the material analyzed in the test tube and the scientist who mixes the ingredients, weighs the substances, and appraises the findings, telling himself what he discovers himself to be.

The Scotch philosophers of the eighteenth century were students of human nature. Indeed, they had without an exception inherited the interests and methods of the philosophers of the seventeenth century; but, whereas these latter men of

letters had devoted themselves largely to a consideration of man in his relationship to nature and nature's laws (the scientific interest of the pre-Socratic Greek philosophers of *physis*), the former limited themselves, as did Socrates, to a consideration of human nature, to character and conduct, and to the problems arising out of men's association with themselves.

*Man and Society: the Scottish Inquiry of the Eighteenth Century* is appropriately named. It is a scientific study of the moral philosophy, anthropology, and social science of a group of contemporary Scotch thinkers, ranging from the celebrated and universally known David Hume to relatively obscure writers such as Lords Monbaddo and Kames. Though Lord Monbaddo was praised by his contemporaries as "the most learned man in all of Scotland save Sir William Hamilton," his influence died with the generation that knew him; and Lord Kames is remembered only for his energy and enthusiasm, writing as he did at the age of eighty his *Gentleman Farmer* to spread abroad new ideas of farming. Francis Hutcheson, Adam Smith, and Thomas Reid deserve more serious consideration, and indeed Adam Ferguson, also; for, though he was primarily an interesting teacher, he did leave in his *Institutes of Moral Philosophy* (1769) a systematic treatise on ethics and social and political science that is representative of the opinions and findings of his century. This school of philosophers (Hume must be omitted from any general characterization) took its stand on the permanent good sense of humanity. In their opinion, "man is possessed of a faculty of immediate moral perception and judgment comparable to his faculty of seeing and hearing." In an age when the authority of supernatural revelation was scarcely felt, these men tried to show that there were certain principles of human nature that restrained man's passions and kept him from going to moral wrack and ruin. Through a careful analysis of these principles the members of this Scottish school worked out their view of human nature, man's past and present position in the total scheme of things, society, social institutions, and religion.

*Man and Society* is a good book. Each topic is carefully analyzed and discussed. The work is well documented, and the scholarship is sound and thorough. The style is adequate for the theme.

WILLIAM R. CANNON

Emory University, Georgia.

**John Wesley and William Law.** By J. BRAZIER GREEN. London: The Epworth Press, 1945. pp. 224. 12s. 6d.

This volume, the Fernley-Hartley lecture delivered in England in 1945, is a survey of the theological controversy between two eighteenth-century religious giants, William Law and John Wesley. With informed appreciation of the distinctive genius of Law and Wesley, with thorough knowledge of his field and with marked ability to separate the important from the unimportant, the author traces the controversy through three stages: the influence of Law's mysticism on Wesley before Wesley's conversion in 1738, an influence Wesley later judged perverting and harmful; their theological exchanges culminating in Wesley's famous letter of 1756 vigorously attacking Law's teaching as subversive of "the whole Christian doctrine of the reconciliation of Christ"; and the subsequent development of the thought of each man as refined by the heat of the controversy in 1756. The author uses this chronological scheme as an apparatus to delineate

the differences and affinities of the religious thought of Law and Wesley, and to assess by comparison and contrast the soundness of their respective positions from the viewpoint of evangelical theology.

For the student of either Law or Wesley, this book is helpful in many ways: as a collection of accurate facts; as a reasoned, poised judgment on the merits of a controversy which was no "miserable squabble," as some have reckoned it, but a warm exchange of rigorous thought by two great minds in earnest about Christian truth; and as a stimulus to further research in the rich fields of the life and work of both Law and Wesley.

The appeal of this book to those only casually interested in Wesley and Law will be limited. It is technical rather than popular in its treatment. However, it does remind us that in the writings of William Law one finds the insights of mystical theology and the graces of English literary style singularly united. (Samuel Johnson, according to Boswell, said of Law's *Serious Call*, that it was the "finest piece of hortatory theology in any language"; and Wesley himself, in his old age, wrote in 1788 that the *Serious Call* was a treatise "which will hardly be equalled, if it be excelled, in the English tongue, either for beauty of expression or for justness and depth of thought.") More importantly, this book brings a lengthened dimension to the ever-growing stature of John Wesley. It is fair to say that not only in terms of Christian magnanimity did Wesley come off the winner of this controversy, in that he never descended to the levels of personal recrimination that Law was not above; Wesley also came off the winner intellectually and theologically. One lays down Green's book with gratitude for the interesting and accurate manner in which the author has described the issues between these two minds, with freshened appreciation of the literary genius and mystical religion of William Law, and above all with deepened respect for the integrity and vigor of the mind of John Wesley. Make no mistake about it, John Wesley was not only a man of warmed heart; he was also a man of great mind.

PAUL WAITMAN HOON

The First Methodist Church, Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

**Church Life in England in the Thirteenth Century.** By JOHN R. H. MOORMAN. Cambridge University Press, 1945. pp. xii, 445. \$6.00.

Liberals depressed by the present state of the Church in the world may renew faith in progress by reading this painstaking account of ordinary parish, diocesan, and monastic life in what is popularly known as the "greatest of centuries." Mr. Moorman is neither a romanticist nor a muckraker, as those who know his careful study of the sources of the life of St. Francis can testify. Here again in his latest work there is the same objectivity and fairness, the same rigorous attention to all available evidence. Reading the record, one cannot question the fact that the clergy today are better educated, better paid, better behaved, more thoroughly devoted. Yet the Church today by no means has the same resources, the same position in society, the same authority over the lives of men. In spite of the inferior qualifications of the thirteenth-century clergy, however, there were perhaps as many distinguished leaders and reformers in high places in the Church in that century as in our own.

Mr. Moorman accounts for this situation by reasoning akin to contemporary judgments upon the ills of the Church by Archbishop Pecham, the learned Fran-



ciscan primate of Canterbury. The problem in large part revolved around the evils of pluralism, absenteeism, and non-ordination. About one-half the parishes were rectories; less than half the rectors were in priest's orders; about two-thirds of parish revenues were appropriated (chiefly by religious houses). The average income of a rector was about three or four pounds; whereas the vicars and chaplains, who actually ministered to the people, received very much less. What this meant in terms of the parish priest's intellectual fitness may be gauged by comparing the cost of books—the cheapest Bible was fifty pounds in modern money. Even those fortunate enough to get to a university for study would not receive much in the way of a theological education. As Mr. Moorman dryly remarks: "It is well to remember that though the possession of a university degree was assuredly a sign of some education, it did not guarantee any training in religious knowledge." As for the opportunities for any instruction in the inner life, it was practically nonexistent.

Mr. Moorman also lays stress on the lack of vocation, the attraction of fairly secure (if nonetheless small) material rewards combined with a real equality of opportunity for preferment, and "the endless pastime of litigation which the medieval mind seems to have found so irresistible." Any discipline which reforming bishops tried to exert was upset by appeals to Rome and the dispensations of the Curia. Huge dioceses with poor means of communication (Bede complained about this in the eighth century) added to the bishop's difficulties, even when he was conscientious about visitation. On the clergy's morals Mr. Moorman warns us to be reasonable in our judgments. "Many of the medieval clergy lived in isolated villages and hamlets cut off from all chance of sober relaxation and with none of the solaces of home life or books."

The monasteries contained the most orderly and comfortable life—he speaks of them as a "residential country club"—but had ceased to attract the best type of men. There is little evidence of moral laxity in them, however; and if the universities were the centers of learning, the monasteries did keep up their libraries and produced a goodly number of able historians. Quite surprising is the evidence of their constant financial insolvency, despite heavy resources (this was true also of the bishops). Retrenchment seems to have been the last resort; yet somehow they always managed to come through, and none of the houses passed out of existence. Mr. Moorman does not go into detail about the friars, as their tale is told elsewhere. But they are his heroes, and thanks to them there was some improvement in the standards of the clergy and a steady growth of preaching. They introduced that element of competition so lacking among the clergy at the opening of the century.

MASSEY H. SHEPHERD, JR.

Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

**Church and Leadership.** By F. R. BARRY. London: S. C. M. Press, 1945. pp. 154. 8/6.

While this book is written primarily for members of the Church of England, it could be read with profit by all. The first two chapters, "To Interpret This Time" and "The Church in the World," constitute an excellent and solid summary on these themes. The writer is concerned primarily with history as the sphere of God's action, as witness the following quotation: "The most dangerous chal-



lenge to religion comes now not from science but from history." He asks, "Is there any rational purpose at work? Is God or Christ at the heart of it?" And answers in the affirmative, "God is at work as evidenced particularly in the Cross and Resurrection." "The Resurrection is the key to history."

On "The Church in the World" he rapidly sketches the church's activity with special relation to the war period and sees God's hand in the World Council of Churches and, therefore, great hope. Had William Temple lived another ten years, "he might have become spokesman for Christendom." He further says: "In truth one cannot easily exaggerate the potential influence of this world community, actually existing and in being—bound by the ties of common faith and worship which are of more than this world—on the course of international relationships. It may be the soul of the coming world-order. Let us recall that all this has been happening at the very time when good men were abandoning any substantial hope of a world-society, knowing well that without it we must all perish. May we not here rightly find evidences of the grand design of Providence in history and of God's will for the church today? 'The leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.'"

The remaining chapters of the book deal chiefly with the Church of England. While not of direct interest to the outsider, they are valuable to any reader as indicating the currents of thought now flowing through that ancient yet ever young and active branch of the Christian Church. The concluding chapters on leadership in thought, in worship, and in pastoral and social activity are of more than local interest.

Despite the fact that this book is intended chiefly for the writer's own communion, it will repay anyone's reading. A great deal of solid thought and sound advice is packed in these few chapters.

RT. REV. G. ASHTON OLDHAM

Bishop of Albany, New York.

**How You Can Help Other People.** By SAMUEL M. SHOEMAKER. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1946. pp. 189. \$1.75.

Here is a helpful contribution to modern apologetics, defending Christianity against the common current charge that it is irrelevant to our age by pointing out its therapeutic powers in dealing with defeat, fear, sickness, loneliness, resentment, self-pity, and bereavement.

The author is to be commended for his effort to be specific, but it is very difficult to be specific and at the same time profound. For this reason the book becomes a mixture. It has penetrating insights like, "We never recognize human nature in the raw so much as when we see ourselves clinging for dear life to the foul but warm nest where we may continue to indulge the immaturity of unfaced conflicts" (p. 56). It has naïve prescriptions like "Of course our windows should be wide open at night" (p. 102) in the chapter on "Helping People to Keep Normal." It is a mixture also of the direct aggressive approach to counseling which probes vigorously into people's problems dictating solutions, and the indirect approach which leaves the conference completely in the hands of the person being interviewed.

At best the book combines a Christlike desire to understand and uplift the inner lives of people, a long lifetime of experience as a pastor, and the knowledge

that "therapy depends upon a wise blending of the very new science of psychology and the very old faith of religion" (p. 39). At worst it seems to combine a conservative theology, the oversimplifications of the Oxford Group Movement, and something like Dale Carnegie psychology. The net result is an interesting practical introduction to pastoral work for busy ministers and laymen with much good sermon material and quotable illustrations.

WINFIELD S. HAYCOCK

Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**Mother of Carmel: A portrait of St. Teresa of Jesus.** By E. ALLISON PEERS. London: S.C.M. Press, 1945. pp. 163. 8/6. Morehouse-Gorham, \$2.50.

Those who know Professor Peers as an authoritative scholar in the field of Spanish mysticism have long known that he also has the gift of clear and attractive popular writing. It is a great satisfaction to be able to report that he has now applied these gifts with the success that might have been expected to a brief study of the great woman who is the central figure in the bright galaxy of Spanish saints. There is really little more to be said about his book than that it gives us what a life of St. Teresa can best provide—an outline of her external career and a glimpse of her writings. The author leaves, and means to leave, a certain vagueness after sketching in the outlines. St. Teresa has written so well about her own career and about God's dealings with the human soul that the author of a book about her is well advised to make his work in the strictest sense of the word an introduction.

Perhaps as significant as the writing of this book is its publication by the Student Christian Movement Press in 1945. St. Teresa has much to teach the Christians of today, those of other communions as well as her own. We need not pause here to justify the Carmelite vocation, except to note that it makes prayer the business of life and simplicity its guiding rule, an activity and a quality which surely rank high in any scale of Christian values. A saint who plumbed the depths of mystical fellowship with God and was at the same time a woman of abounding vitality, humor, and common sense is a fascinating figure on her own account as well as being a guide and inspiration to countless others. As we journey with her across the hills of Spain, which for Teresa and her daughters in Christ were also the foothills of Mount Zion, we share an exciting life whose chief adventure was the discovery of the interior mansions where God waters the garden of the soul. And can our age forget that wisdom is nothing unless informed by the love of God and man, and that it is a catastrophe to win the world at the price of losing our own souls? To St. Teresa her Sisters in their Spanish convents were called to be true watchmen on the walls of Zion; and such in life and death she has been herself.

E. R. HARDY, JR.

Berkeley Divinity School, New Haven, Connecticut.

**Pirke Aboth.** Edited with Introduction, Translation, and Commentary. By R. TRAVERS HERFORD. Jewish Institute of Religion, 1945. pp. vii-176. \$2.00.

The commentary on *Pirke Aboth*, or "Sayings of the Fathers," by Dr. R.

Travers Herford, first appeared in 1925. In the Preface to that first edition, the author took pains to explain why in his judgment a new interpretation of this rabbinic classic was necessary. Was not the elaborate work of Taylor adequate? Did not Oesterley's more popular contribution to its understanding serve the needs of the interested student?

It appeared that the chief aim of Dr. Herford in this undertaking was to present "the inner meaning of Pharisaism as illustrated in *Aboth*." The author felt that only one who had come to know "what the Judaism of the Pharisees meant from the inside, and not merely what it looks like from the outside," could garner the information most helpful to the student of the subject.

That the reader of this type of literature has found Dr. Herford's translation and commentary more serviceable and satisfying than any of his predecessors, is clearly evidenced by the fact that the work is now in its third edition. The new edition, moreover, containing as it does a new and illuminating Introduction, promises to become even more popular than the previous editions.

The great merit of Dr. Herford's interpretation of the "Sayings of the Fathers" lies in the fact that he seeks to understand and evaluate this unique product of rabbinic thought "by sympathy from within, not by mere inspection from without." To Herford, *Aboth* is not just another ancient classic to be deciphered and rendered into modern terms. He rightly recognizes that "*Aboth* speaks to the heart of the Jew in a manner and with a force seldom realized by non-Jewish readers." That Dr. Herford, himself a non-Jew, should have succeeded in catching the "melodies which sing divinely in a Jewish ear," is perhaps the most notable achievement of the present exposition.

In form, too, the commentary of Dr. Herford is best calculated to appeal to student and reader alike. Each individual "saying" is treated as a unit. The Hebrew text is followed by the English translation. Then comes the interpretation, which, in turn, is succeeded by luminous notes of an historical and biographical character. The notes, while intended for the scholar, will prove as rewarding and, in most instances, as interesting to the average reader.

One is at a loss to know why Dr. Herford prepared his commentary, as he tells us, primarily for the Jewish reader. One would think that the New Testament student was in greater need of an authentic and sympathetic presentation of Pharisaic teachings than any Jewish reader. In fact, we know of no better way to redress an ancient wrong than to disseminate a fuller appreciation of these priceless gems of Pharisaic thought as they shine forth from the pages of Dr. Herford's commentary.

ISRAEL BETTAN

Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**The Apocryphal Literature.** By CHARLES CUTLER TORREY. Yale University Press, 1945. pp. x-151. \$3.00.

Like the generation that knew not Joseph we are living in a generation that has virtually forgotten the Apocryphal literature. For a generation most editions of the Scriptures have omitted these extracanonical books, and outside of casual use in theological seminaries, most people no longer know that they exist. It is timely to have an authoritative presentation, as this is, of these books which both Jew and Christian once revered.

Professor Torrey, whose eminence in biblical and Semitic studies is well known, undertakes to bring the significance of the Apocryphal literature to our attention. His very able presentation is divided into two parts. The first part consists of a general introduction in which he discusses the use made of this literature by the Jews, the early Christians, and the Christian Church during the intervening years. He tells us that the early Christians, when they spoke of these books as apocryphal, meant what St. Jerome had in mind, that they were "Scriptures outside the Canon"; and he suggests that we would be wise to return to this early meaning of the word "apocryphal" as the "outside" rather than the "hidden" books. This general introduction is of great interest, and gives a historical perspective of Scripture that will enrich one's grasp of the Bible and literature associated with it.

The second portion of the book deals with each of the thirty-one Apocryphal Books in turn, giving a synopsis of the content of each, its purpose, its authorship and date, and the original language in which it was written. These discussions are a permanent contribution to the history of biblical literature. For one thing, they bring together in the compass of one volume a full discussion of literature which heretofore had been scattered through many volumes. More important, Professor Torrey's consideration of the original language and importance of these books is so genuinely fresh and original that both the scholar and the general reader will turn to it with instructive profit.

EDWIN EDGAR VOIGT

President, Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa.

**The Making of a Preacher.** By W. M. MACGREGOR. London: S. C. M. Press, Ltd., and Macmillan of Canada, 1945. pp. 79. 3s.6d.

Another book on preaching? Yes, and an excellent one! These are the Warrack Lectures of 1942-43 by W. M. MacGregor, published posthumously and introduced by a biographical sketch. This tribute to him as a man and preacher by his colleague, A. J. Gossip, is enough to commend the book. The brief lectures that follow are the simmered-down wisdom of one of Scotland's most forthright preachers and a teacher of preachers. In 1919 he was elected Moderator of the General Assembly. From 1919 to 1935 he was professor of New Testament at Trinity College. From 1928 to 1938 he was principal of the College. Thus his life was with preachers, but more than that he was himself utterly consumed in his ministry. As a result, Dr. Gossip claims that two of MacGregor's six volumes of printed sermons belong to a small circle of religious classics with Newman, Robertson, and Dean Church.

This book merits a hearing, particularly among men who know only the conversational, argumentative style of preaching. It is a splendid illustration of what the Scots do best, the use of preaching for a forthright witness of the power of the gospel. Best of all, here is laid bare the heart of a great preacher. MacGregor did not confine himself to market-place language, but achieved a beauty of utterance without ornamentation. His picture words set the imagination aflame.

These are not lectures on the mechanics of preaching, the tricks of the trade, and its short cuts to popularity; they deal with the heart of the matter, the preacher himself. His first chapter, "An Ideal Ministry," turns contemptuously from peddlars of soporifics to a searching inquiry into the qualifications of a preacher.

He must be "himself a man with men," not one vocationally aloof. He must have an abiding sympathy with men and their infirmities. Specifically he "must have a heart for the business." Supremely, he must be a man at home with God. Was it not Lincoln who said he liked to hear a preacher who knew God other than by hearsay?

This basic theme he enlarges in the following chapters, and closes with two lectures on "The Enriching of a Preacher Through Reading" and "The Theme and Quality of the Preaching Which Should ensue." Two sentences will give the trend of his thought. A minister "should not enter the pulpit without something of Christ's temper when he wept over the city." With Bunyan he depicts the ideal preacher as one who had "the law of truth upon his lips, the world behind his back, and who stood as if he pleaded with men."

The book should be an antidote for many that offer short-cut methods of making preachers. He sees the core of our preaching in our inner discovery of God. What one finds leaves no excuse for sordid language, but must burst forth in preaching that has a yearning, beckoning quality in it.

You would miss half the value of the lectures if it were not for Dr. Gossip's unveiling of the inner nature of the lecturer. Apparently, for all his royal lines, he had a difficult nature to manage. Knowing this, his ideal of the ministry as he depicts it asks nothing of others that he did not ask more strictly of himself. Here is a brief series of lectures that depicts an ideal ministry and a biographical sketch that describes one.

GORDON C. CHAPMAN

Westwood Community Methodist Church, Los Angeles, California.

**Heart and Mind.** By SYDNEY G. DIMOND. London: The Epworth Press, 1945. pp. 269. 12s.6d.

The author of *The Psychology of the Methodist Revival* (London: Oxford University Press, 1926) has once more brought under critical scrutiny a significant factor in evangelism. In *Heart and Mind*, Dr. Dimond leaves the boundaries of psychological investigation "to review the primary facts of religious experience in order to seek the more ultimate explanation which they demand." The writer is a member of the theological faculty in the University of London and in this latest volume has produced a work of basic importance for the philosophy of religion.

The main thesis of this study is the affirmation that evangelical religion can be vindicated at the bar of critical and speculative thought and that it is a reliable witness to the nature of ultimate reality. But one does not find here a pedantic attempt to construct or defend epistemological and ontological presuppositions. The method is more empirical and surveys the wide field of philosophical and theological learning, seeking insights regarding the possible contributions of religious experience to the historical development of these disciplines. Dr. Dimond writes on this high theme in nontechnical language which the layman can understand.

Part I considers the relation of philosophy and religion. The latter may, on purely empirical grounds, lay claim to valid insights. "The light which reveals what is ultimately satisfying and desirable in life is the gift of those whose minds have been illumined by that intuition which is the result of faith" (p. 21). The inferences drawn from the intuitive cognitions of religious experience "must



not imply any disparagement of reason or we shall be in a worse plight through slipshod and uncritical thinking" (p. 22).

Part II is a series of descriptive chapters surveying the outstanding facts of experience which constitute the distinctively evangelical type of religion. Included here are discussions of "salvation by faith," the "process of conversion," the "meaning of sin, repentance, forgiveness," and the significance of atonement.

Part III continues the survey with a review of historical and contemporary ethical and aesthetic theories, maintaining the search for implications the origins of which may be accounted for only through recognition of valid religious experience. Dr. Dimond's earlier studies in the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian Perfection are evidenced in the chapters on ethics. His discussion of "sanctification and social regeneration" is especially noteworthy (pp. 170ff.).

Part IV returns to the field of metaphysics and value theory. Here, again, the insights of religious experience are thoughtfully considered and evaluated as indispensable factors in an adequate philosophy.

The reader in the United States will note the absence of reference to the scholarly works of the theological empiricists in this country who have been critically examining this same area of human experience and have avoided some of the presuppositions for which Dr. Dimond inevitably will suffer criticism. *Heart and Mind*, nevertheless, is a significant book which seeks to bring us "at last to the truth that to know God as Creator and Redeemer is the beginning of the most practical wisdom. The adoring heart and enquiring mind may pursue their quest together."

DAVID C. SHIPLEY

Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Illinois.

**See the Christ Stand. A Study in Doctrine in the United Church of Canada.**

By RANDOLPH CARLETON CHALMERS. Boston: Bruce Humphries, 1945. pp. xiii-307. \$6.00.

The author of this substantial volume is a native of the Province of New Brunswick and a doctor of theology of Emmanuel College, Toronto. In Part I, Dr. Chalmers examines the history of theology in the Presbyterian, Congregational, and Methodist churches and the Basis of Union of the United Church of Canada. In Part II he treats contemporary theology and attempts to suggest desirable future developments in the theology of the United Church. Scripture, Augustine, and pre-Reformation theology are sketchily treated as background to the main concern of chapter 1, "Theology in the Presbyterian Churches." With the aid of numerous modern interpreters Calvin's theology is summarily expounded. The Scottish Confession of 1560 is used to exhibit the doctrines of the Scottish Reformation, and the Westminster Confession receives a sprightly analysis in which its values are appreciated. The author does not favor Calvinist high predestinarianism, and interprets the Westminster phrase "elect infants dying in infancy" as implying that some so dying are not elect—"a case of predestination outlawing the mercy of Christ." There is no attempt to trace the evolution of theological teaching, either in Scotland or in Canada; under the stresses of modern thought. In his examination of the Congregational tradition the author makes Wyclif a forerunner, a view which sidesteps the fact that Wyclif looked to the king to institute reforms. The writings of Robert Browne and of the Separatist



exiles after 1593 are briefly reviewed, and suitable notice is given to Congregational Puritanism in early New England. In his treatment of Methodism, Chalmers features Wesley's abridgement and alteration of the Thirty-nine Articles, and shares the enthusiasm which he reports from numerous writers on elements in Wesley's thought. Some weaknesses are detected, however, in Wesley's doctrine of perfection and in his conception of the church. As in the case of Presbyterianism, so in the chapters on Congregationalism and Methodism, *Canadian* theological teaching, writing, and controversy are left out of the story. Part I ends with a critical evaluation of the United Church Basis of Union, which in its weaknesses reflects the low condition of theology when it was framed (1908).

Part II devotes seventy-two pages, in two chapters, to "current theological thought"; these include only three pages on Canada, in which no Canadian theologians are named. Instead we have a readable and discriminating report on liberalism, idealism, naturalism, humanism, the theologies of Barth, Brunner, and Niebuhr, and neo-Thomism. Canadians have been exposed to these contemporary forces in theology. The author's reactions to them are well and reasonably stated; but how they have found expression or resistance in the United Church of Canada is not made clear. Theology is admittedly weak and unoriginal in the United Church, but it is far from being nonexistent. The closing chapter, "The United Church and Its Theology Tomorrow," is a plea for theological activity as against the mere attempt to apply Christianity without interpreting it. The interpretation modestly put forward as desirable would affirm "the moral and spiritual authority of the Word of God," avoid the negations and dualism of Barth, and point the way to the Kingdom of God. The renewed activity in theology, he believes, will have to wait for a spiritual quickening which will come only when "we saturate our minds and hearts in the knowledge of the Bible."

If the book tends to give the somewhat unfair impression that a theological vacuum exists in the United Church of Canada, it will at any rate undoubtedly have a highly stimulating effect upon Canadian and other readers. Important documents of the parent churches and of the United Church are appended. These include the Statement of Faith approved in 1940. A few errors occur which should be rectified in future printings. On pages 34 and 57 the reign of Charles I is pushed far back into that of his father; and on page 36 the *Formula consensus Helvetica* is strangely referred to as *Formula concordae*. Footnotes are economically managed by a system of numbered titles.

JOHN T. MCNEILL

Union Theological Seminary, New York City.

**Men and Movements in the American Episcopal Church.** By E. CLOWES CHORLEY. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946. pp. ix-501. \$4.00.

In this book the Episcopal Church's historiographer gives a racy account of the men and movements in the church from early times down to the present. If he seems to give undue stress to the High Churchmen that is only because they were the church's bad boys, kept the bishops constantly on edge, and liked nothing better than fighting for the faith once delivered to the saints. Controversy is never nice, especially in the household of faith, but it provides grand copy for a writer. Dr. Chorley has made the most of it.

The early Episcopalians were Evangelicals with a good dash of the Puritan

in them. They were always fighting the good fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Although the 1817 General Convention shied away from adopting Francis Scott Key's resolution condemning amusements, several diocesan conventions took a stronger stand. Virginia, for example, warned that "gaming, attending on theaters, public halls, and race-horsing should be relinquished by all communicants of this church."

The early Evangelicals gave way to the High Churchmen, led by New York's Bishop John Henry Hobart. They were not ritualists in any sense, but stressed the prayerbook, the teachings, and practices of the primitive church, exalted the three orders of bishop, priest, and deacon. Religious enthusiasm to them came near being a deadly sin. Piety was their aim.

They got along very nicely until 1833 when the Oxford Movement and *Tracts for the Times* burst like a bomb and rained dissension on the church. Bishop Manton Eastburn of Massachusetts called the movement "the work of Satan." Other bishops held the same opinion. But the movement made headway with some of the clergy, got a warm welcome in some divinity schools, and soon the bishops were faced with the ugly spectre of ritualism. Bishop McIlvaine of Ohio refused to consecrate an altar which was not "an honest table with four legs." Bishop William Whittingham of Maryland did not mind embroidered crosses on stoles, but he banned fringes. Such were episcopal problems.

Despite episcopal frowns, the High Church clergy became bolder and bolder. They introduced high mass with incense, sprinkled the congregation with holy water, erected confessionals, reserved the sacrament, and the bolder ones had Benediction and Processions of the Blessed Sacrament. Each innovation cheered the hearts of High Churchmen, deepened the worries of bishops. Some prelates cut advanced parishes from their visitation lists, but most bishops just looked the other way, like the late Bishop Charles Gore of Oxford who, when visiting an advanced London parish, said to the vicar, "You can do anything, but I *won't* be kissed."

As High Church clergy became elected to the episcopate, opposition died down. Today there are only a few Evangelical bishops who will not don cope and mitre when visiting a High Church parish. The High Churchmen have gained their points, but they kept the church in constant turmoil while they were doing it, and Dr. Chorley takes about a third of his book to recount the various incidents involved in the struggle. The High Churchmen not only have changed the Episcopal Church from what it was a century ago, but they have had immense influence in giving an impetus to the liturgical movement which has gained headway in nearly all Protestant churches.

Dr. Chorley thinks the dividing lines between the High Churchmen (who prefer to be called "Catholics") and the Evangelicals are growing fainter. It is true that the High Church group now includes a "Liberal Catholic" group. But whether there will ever be a real unity between the two groups cannot be said. One obstacle, of course, is the pro-Roman High Church group. It is a small group, to be sure, but it has shown that it has considerable power and influence. So long as this group is around, Dr. Chorley's optimism is not justified.

E. SINCLAIR HERTELL

Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York City.

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**Our Christian Faith.** By Walter M. Horton. Pilgrim Press. 75¢, paper. A readable, popular presentation, based on a "Statement of Faith" suggested for The Congregational Christian Churches.

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